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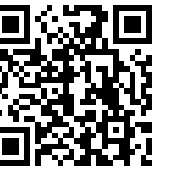

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THE RETURN OF THE DARK INVADER

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By the same Author

THE DARK INVADER

[Now in its 7th impression]

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MARIE-LUISE

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THE RETURN OF THE DARK INVADER

by

CAPTAIN VON RINTELEN

LOVAT DICKSON & THOMPSON LIMITED
PUBLISHERS
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DD
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TO

MARIE-LUISE

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"Ein seiner Geschichte und seiner vierjährigen Kriegsleistung nach so starkes Volk wie das deutsche hat ein Anrecht darauf, völlig klar zu sehen, wie die Ereignisse sich in Wirklichkeit abgespielt haben."

Generalfeldmarschall von Hindenburg
vor dem Reichstag-Untersuchungs-Ausschuss
in Berlin, am 18. November 1919.

"Their history, and their achievements during four years of War, have proved the German People to be courageous and strong enough to be allowed to hear the truth."

Field-Marshal von Hindenburg,
before the Reichstag Investigation Committee
in Berlin, 18 November, 1919.

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PREFACE

CAPTAIN VON RINTELEN comes unwillingly on to the stage for a second time.

In January 1933 we published *The Dark Invader*, an autobiographical account of his experiences as a sabotage agent in the United States of America during the War. Rintelen had been the chief figure in that work, which had ramifications and results far beyond the knowledge of the general public, and which had been as dangerous a task as any entrusted to a man during the War.

Rintelen left Germany early in 1915. At that time he was a young naval officer; a man coming from one of the oldest and most distinguished families in Germany, of wide social experience in England, France and the United States, and of not inconsiderable wealth. He entered the United States on a false passport, posing as a Swiss citizen, and using the name of Emile V. Gaché.

Entrusted with huge funds, he quickly rallied round him sympathisers to the German cause and secret agents of his Government. He fomented the plan for inciting Mexico to war against the United States; he blew up munition stocks; manufactured "cigar" bombs with delayed fuses and placed them in the holds of ships carrying munitions across the Atlantic to the Allies. His was a work of destruction; its justification was that it hampered the hostile acts, as Rintelen and his Government saw them, of a neutral country.

Finally he was caught by the British. His capture was

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a testimony to the acuteness and daring of our Naval Intelligence Service. A series of cable messages, imprudently, if not recklessly, sent by the German Military Attaché in New York, had been promptly intercepted and deciphered in London, as the secret code that was designed for use between Berlin and the German Embassy in Washington, had somehow or other become "available" to our Admiralty. The Dutch ship on which he was returning was stopped by a British naval vessel in the North Sea, was escorted to Ramsgate, where, on British soil, Rintelen was arrested. After interrogation in London he was taken to Donington Hall.

Then the Americans, themselves now at war with Germany, and realising, on the evidence produced in London, what had been done on their shores, demanded Rintelen; and the British, by an act that can be defended only on the ground that in war anything is fair, delivered Rintelen over to the American Government. He was tried before an American Civil Court, and sentenced to five years' hard labour.

The War ended in 1918, but it was not until 1921 that Rintelen was freed. He returned to Germany to find his country, which, when he had left it, had been in the full pride of its nationhood, rapidly dissolving into the chaos that reached its height in 1932.

In such a Germany there was no room for this naval officer, or for any representative of the régime that had fallen from public grace. The story of Rintelen's return is one of the dramatic episodes of the post-war period. It forms a part of the manuscript that makes this book.

But the manuscript has a greater interest than this personal one. Much of the secret history of the growth of the new Germany is here told for the first time. It is a story

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of intrigue and treachery on the one hand, and on the other, of an amazing loyalty and implicit patriotism.

The story of *The Dark Invader* ended when he left the grey walls of the Atlanta Penitentiary behind him. The account of his return begins with the sight of the deserted docks and shipyards of Bremerhaven. How it ends Captain von Rintelen himself tells.

THE PUBLISHERS.

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CHAPTER I

THE presidential decree of "pardon" that prefaces this book marked the beginning of my new life. Now back from gloom to radiance!

When the grey gates of the Atlanta Penitentiary swung open on that winter morning in 1921, and I stepped into the world again, a free man, one part of my life, though I did not realise it then, was ended. But it was not an end of my activity, not a fading away into a quiet and peaceful middle age.

The days of the old glory were gone; the War was over, and my part in it finished on this dull winter's morning. The days of the new Germany, torn by strife and revolution, were just dawning. My own life, had I but known it, was beginning afresh, and like a microcosm of my country's struggle for recognition, my fight for right and vindication was to follow a stormy and eventful course.

That in itself would not be justification for another book, were it not for the fact that what on my return began as a private "war" with German Governments took on the aspects of an open, and on occasions even an international, contention. The weapons of peace are often more treacherous than those of war. Calumny and vilification, perjury and international trickery, secret attempts at bribery, and political plotting come into the story.

The fifteen years since my return to Germany from an American prison have been lively years; and now that my new life seems definitely to be setting its course away from the shores of my beloved country, much that I have felt I

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should keep private in this last decade and a half may be made known.

What I told in *The Dark Invader* I told with pride.

That adventure ended for me in a sentence of five years' hard labour. Yet, I was conscious of no sense of shame or defeat. The emotion I felt was pride.

What I have to tell in this book fills me with no such feeling of achievement.

Yet, I would not have you think, before you start, that here is a lugubrious tale, like the sad stories that *émigrés* tell in the havens of refuge they inhabit in Paris and London. I have no favour to ask of anyone. I am a free man, anxious only for my old country's good, desirous above all things that she be not shamed in the eyes of the world. Much of the ancient greatness has departed from Germany, and there is nobody who will deny the extent of her tribulation, unique amongst nations in modern history, since the War, or condemn her efforts to recover her former prestige.

I liken Germany since the War to a giant tied down by thongs that appeared unbreakable, and in her weakened state she lay a target for all the spiteful arrows and slings of those who would seek to gain by her misfortune. It is not France with her panic-stricken occupation of the Ruhr, or the Allied countries with their unreasonable and uneconomic demands for Reparations, that are alone to be blamed for her unhappy post-war history. Within the Reich there have been enemies at work; and among the greatest and most treacherous are names I shall reveal of men who have occupied, and are still occupying, in some cases, positions of political importance in the German service.

The story is not without its humorous aspects. How inconceivably small the human intellect can be, only critical events can effectively show. The Greeks, more rational

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beings than we, would have allowed their gods to laugh at such human antics. . . .

Nor, I think, is it without its agreeable aspects; life is pretty much the same the world over, only the environment differs. There are still great men and great women to be counted as friends and lovers; and while that lasts, the world, in spite of political and private upheavals, is a pleasant and sometimes an ennobling place to live in.

* * * * *

I have put the word Pardon in inverted commas.

Why?

One short paragraph: I had received *no* clemency!

Nothing need be added to the following statement the Attorney General of the United States found it necessary to issue a few days after my release, and in reply to severe newspaper criticisms of his administration for having set free the "Hun Master Head," "Germany's Sabotage Chief":

Editor *Washington Post.*

An article on the editorial page of Sunday's *Post* refers to Franz von Rintelen as one "whom President Wilson has restored to liberty by means of a pardon remitting the remainder of the four years in prison at Atlanta, for conspiracy to destroy American property by means of bomb outrages." I cannot hope to correct all the misstatements in reference to this case which have gone the rounds of the press, but the story in The *Post* is so conspicuously displayed, and makes such confident assertion of the facts, that I think some effort should be made to correct the false impression which it creates.

Von Rintelen was not pardoned by the President, and neither was any portion of his term of imprison-

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ment remitted. He served not only the entire term of imprisonment to which he was sentenced, but in addition thereto more than the thirty days usually assessed for non-payment of fine. On the records at the Atlanta Penitentiary he did not get proper credit for seven months' imprisonment in other institutions, and, therefore, the warden at Atlanta was powerless to release him, although he had actually served his time. To meet this peculiar situation, the most practical method seemed to be for the President to commute his sentence to expire at once, so that he might be released and have the benefit accruing from the fact that he had actually served the full period for which he was sentenced.

(*Signed*) A. MITCHELL PALMER
Attorney General.

Unfortunately, the news of my "pardon" had been cabled, by the Associated Press, to Europe, and to Germany in particular; and the impression created thereby explains much of the strange reception I found upon my return, both by those who were full of praise for Wilson and his Fourteen Points, and by those who felt that an officer should never accept—clemency from the enemy. . . .

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BREMERHAVEN

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CHAPTER II

I SAID that only the environment in life changes. Let me take up my story with my return from America in 1921; to the new Germany only recently recovered from the first throes of revolution.

The American-owned ship in which I was to take passage back to Germany, turned out to be an obsolete small vessel, the S.S. *Susquehana*; and the S.S. *Susquehana*, in the days before the Allies took possession of German shipping all the world over, had been none other than the S.S. *Rhein*.

I took leave of the watchful detective whose duty it was to see me safely off the shores of the United States, and, with serene composure, embarked.

It took the ship about a fortnight to come in sight of the first landmarks of my country. Slowly we passed up to Borkum Lightship. A few more minutes, and we were within territorial waters.

Deutschland, mein Deutschland!

I could scarcely keep back my tears when I saw, at the harbour entrance, the strange mixture of colours that had supplanted the proud old flag under which I had fought and lived throughout those years: *die Flagge schwarz, weiss, rot.*

* * * * *

My mind drifted back to my cell. . . . The time was a few days after the Armistice; we had just learnt the news. We had been crying, my fine old cell-mate, Captain von Kleist, and I—crying like children for hours and hours, trying to console one another far into the night, over the whole tragedy of this Armistice.

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Our splendid High Seas Fleet was to be surrendered—the pride of the whole nation!

Millions of rifles and guns, thousands of aeroplanes, locomotives, lorries—and what not else!

Even our Government archives were to be opened to an Inter-Allied Military Commission, and all documents, codes, and secret orders for the Army and Navy Staffs, and those for the submarine commanders, were to be handed over to the Allied High Command, who were, it seemed, intoxicated by their unexpected and alas! so complete success.

Poor Erzberger! Poor General von Winterfeldt! Poor Kapitän Vanselow! . . .

They had been sitting in their luxurious "dining-car" in the gloom of the Forêt de Compiègne, shut off from the outside world, at the mercy of French and British officers, whose hard faces never relaxed as they passed in and out with the messages to those delegates from the German G.H.Q. at Spa, or from the delegates to their chiefs.

The Allied High Command had imposed the condition that these messages should all be *en clair*: they could read every word.

There had been days of struggling and haggling with Foch, *Maréchal de France*, and with his assistant, General Weygand. The German delegates had succeeded in wrenching from their fierce opponents some concessions, some modifications, of the harsh terms they sought to impose, when, like a bolt from the blue, Hindenburg's fateful message came:—

"*Auch wenn keine Milderungen zu erzielen sind, so ist dennoch zu unterzeichnen.*"

("Even if no mitigations obtainable, sign notwithstanding.")

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Yet, in spite of this order, this admission of despair from their superiors, those negotiators were, later on, held up as no better than traitors, responsible for their country's doom.

What more unfortunate lot could have been theirs?

* * * * *

In those days of national disaster and moral breakdown there was one man who showed initiative and presence of mind. He left the front in a powerful military car, forced his way through troops in retreat or in mutiny, and the supplies columns, dashed across the frontier, over the Rhine, and on, to Berlin, to the Wilhelmstrasse, to the *Grosser General-Stab* buildings. There he picked a handful of absolutely reliable men, and over-riding the strictest injunctions of the newly-established "9th November" Government, selected out of the mass of documents in those archives that had to be surrendered to the hated enemy, what seemed to him the most important, bundled them together, and . . . thus succeeded in getting them away safely before the lynx-eyed officers of the Inter-Allied Military Commission arrived close upon his heels.

That man was Hauptmann von Bose; his name is to be remembered.

* * * * *

Now I stood on the *Susquehana's* deck, face to face with the realities which the Catastrophe had engendered. I had left my country still filled with all her splendour and all her pride, still ruled by a great dynasty with centuries of unbroken tradition.

Had it been necessary that, on my return, I found her in the throes of upheaval, torn apart by revolutionary movements?

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Had it really been necessary that such misfortune should befall Germany?

Had it been necessary that the Kaiser should leave his throne?

Was not a grave mistake made when he was advised by General Gröner and by Hindenburg to abdicate, in order—so they said—to save his country from becoming a prey to subversive elements?

Were those two men right in the belief they expressed to him: that his return at the head of the Army would, unavoidably, bring civil war in its trail?

Time and again, in the years which followed, with the endless quarrels among political factions all over the country, where now party strife seemed to be the only thing that mattered, I found myself asking: Is this Woodrow Wilson's democracy? Would we be any further from Wilson's ideal had the Kaiser remained to lead his people?

No, decidedly no!

There had been no necessity for the Kaiser to leave his throne and quit the country! He had done so, as his proclamation in November 1918 had stated in such dignified terms, stamped with the impress of his own fine human qualities, to spare Germany the horrors of a civil war, which might have to be fought out over his own person.

His was a truly admirable example of abnegation. His reign, had it gone on, might, in spite of defeat and humiliation, have given back to Germany her position, and her prosperity, without severe repercussions on internal and foreign politics.

I could not help drawing a parallel between the microcosm of my own struggles and the last chapter in my country's downfall.

I knew I had observed all the jealousy between depart-

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ments of the administration, the rivalry between civil and military authorities, and between political and spiritual forces.

But I would have dismissed as inconceivable the calamitous possibility that one man, from the pettiest of motives that exist in the world—personal rivalry, where a great cause is at stake—should go to the length of striking at—nay, destroying—an organisation such as that I had just succeeded in putting on a solid foundation in 1915. . . .

Yet so it was.

This one man was our Military Attaché in Washington, Captain Papen.

As a soldier he should have been the first to appreciate how I had taken my fate into my own hands.

I had gone out on a secret mission to a great foreign country, for the sole and truly ideal purpose of trying to save the lives of as many as possible of our own and Austria-Hungary's brave soldiers, who were fighting against such heavy odds: that so many Allied nations should be ranged against my countrymen—that, in itself, would not have outraged their sense of justice; but having to fight munitions, made simply in order to amass dollars—that they regarded as *not* right.

Thanks to the loyalty and patriotism of so many men from the German mercantile marine, I had been able to build up, in a comparatively short time after I had reached God's own country—or had He by then ceded it to Mammon?—an organisation which was beginning to bear fruit.

I did not discuss the question whether that was legal or not; for the niceties of bourgeois "codes," civil or penal or other, I felt must not be taken into serious consideration, when the fate, the lives of tens of thousands of one's fellow-countrymen were at stake.

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When I was brought to trial in 1917, and had to meet my fate at the hands of a worldly judge—I know that my Creator will never blame me for what I did in 1915—it was shown by the dossiers of the Public Prosecutor that I had interfered, temporarily or definitely, with the safe arrival of no less than thirty-two munition ships, and that without the loss of a single life, to my everlasting satisfaction.

It might, then, be safely assumed that if my work had not been interrupted, the havoc wrought on Allied munition ships would, in the long run, have proved crippling; the number of vessels sunk would have gone up by leaps and bounds; how many human lives—on both sides, incidentally—would have been spared, only God knows.

When hundreds of capable men had been straining every nerve, when all that effort and energy could accomplish appeared to be in sight, when our striving for the good of both friend and foe was at last receiving its well-earned reward—millions of murderous shells drowned in the still depths of the ocean—one incapable man, one self-complacent dilettante, one petty spirit, one pitiful intriguer, with no nobler drive than jealousy, was able to bring it all to nought; and to his sheer genius for evil, holocausts were sacrificed!

Papen!

Had I been his only victim, the few years I had to spend in prison would not fill me with a sense of grievance.

But what of the thousands slaughtered for his vanity? Will not their ghosts cry out for all eternity: 'J'accuse!'?

The mission, so carefully, so conscientiously organised in Berlin, and inaugurated with such conspicuous promise of success, had been frustrated by personal ambition.

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It was the same petty-mindedness that had ruined my country.

* * * * *

My thoughts filled me with sadness as my long journey drew to its end.

Two weeks of ploughing through the ocean, with the leisure they bring, cannot fail to make you disentangle your feelings, discern, clearer and clearer, from day to day, what in your life is important, separate minor from major issues. You begin to realise the insignificance of mankind's empty thoughts; their utter shallowness becomes manifest, and everything of lesser import falls from you.

Only great issues, the truly important things, those that *matter*, remain, and appear worthy of your preoccupation. Things become abstract: you begin to thrust your being towards greater dimensions, and the mind gravitates towards positive values: I mean our life, our existence, our appreciation of the good, the striving to realise our desires, and to attain that which calls strongest within us:—love!

In sight of my country, lost to me for so long, my thoughts were forced back upon myself and my own future.

From now on I should have to reorganise, in its entirety, my outlook—mental, political, ethical, social, even emotional. Everywhere life had taken on new aspects, which would have to be harmonised with the old.

Every one of the profoundly sad impressions I received had to be assimilated; and there was no one I could turn to for spiritual aid. For, during the two years that had elapsed since the War, my countrymen had unconsciously come to accept the new order.

But I on my part felt overwhelmed at this sudden confrontation with all that followed upon the Great Catastrophe,

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and the upheaval which had shattered this most highly organised country of mine.

I was arriving when the many changes were already half accomplished. Everything was in a state of ferment. How profound this disruption was, the circumstances of my landing soon made plain.

* * * * *

Tugs chased fussily hither and thither, endeavouring to push the *Susquehana* into the right position and get her properly berthed: our poor little ship had had a rough time, struggling against the heavy, rolling waves of a wintry North Sea.

In the Weser estuary, too, she had had to fight her way against the backwash of huge British liners that were gliding with the tide, majestically downstream. Mist, fog and rain, such as the North Sea knows, were doing their best to make our arrival still more depressing, and added to the already sullen aspect of this almost completely deserted harbour.

" Do you see that magnificent dock, Herr Kapitän? "

One of the officers of the *Susquehana* was addressing me: a German, who had, in the meantime, acquired his skipper's certificate in America. As I turned towards him, he threw up his arms, in despair at the disaster that had befallen his native country.

The officer pointed to a tremendous dock empty of burden, guarded by a pair of huge lock-gates, called the *Kaiserschleuse*: they had been so christened by the Kaiser himself, only a few months before the outbreak of the War.

" There you can see, with your own eyes, how complete is the ruin of our shipping! And look at that gap," he went on, " that's where the giant *Prinz Heinrich* crane had its station—before it had to follow in the wake of those

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hundreds of fine old ships of ours, and be towed to England. John Bull has swallowed it up now."

I felt humiliated, like the mate who was addressing me so outspokenly. But I wanted to try to cheer his dampened spirits and show him the brighter side of it all.

"Poor victors," I said, "yes, poor *victors*! They got drunk with the victory their armies and navies won for them. Don't you realise, my dear fellow, what a magnificent blunder those Allied statesmen have committed? There was not one far-sighted counsellor among them! You would have thought that all those High Commissioners for Peace, all those shipping experts . . ."

"Experts! Don't talk to me about experts!"

"Cheer up, my good fellow! Let the experts have their say, ten times over: they cannot alter experience. No one can rob experience of its cogency. Never mind how depressing it all appears to you *now*:—wait and see! Just think a few years ahead, and you will see that it is our shipwrights who will have the last word! . . ."

As we stood on the deck of the S.S. *Susquehana*, in the port of Bremerhaven, in February 1921, and gazed at the gloom of this desolate scene, my young friend, the mate, only shook his head.

So it is true, I thought: four years of blockade have been enough to cloud the minds of a whole nation.

A young man like this ship's officer, one of the fortunate, who—thanks to his calling—had been brought into contact with the outside world, and had had a chance of shaking off the effects of this horrible blockade, nevertheless was so unable to see the reality ahead that he could only dismiss my optimism with a gesture!

If this was the state of mind in which I was to find my fellow-countrymen, if night had so far fallen on my country,

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then it was worth every effort of mine to search my spiritual horizon for some ray of sunshine.

I had passed through hard days, but cheerfulness had never deserted me; and this cheerfulness I, the home-comer, would bring as the lesson of my *grand tour*.

I had travelled the world; but I had also travelled within myself; and this exploration had led me to the conclusion that only optimism can carry one through.

The realisation of this truth is what Germany had lost during those fateful years!

* * * * *

The ship was at last safely berthed, and the gangways made fast: we waited, a mere handful of passengers, for the habitual rush of porters before disembarking. But there was not a porter in sight!

A few minutes later the news was all over the ship: the dock-hands were on strike in Bremerhaven and Bremen. There was, we were told, a general strike of all transport workers.

The situation was explained to us by one of those—now American—unclassifiable officials that were a remnant of war-time conditions in the shipping world.

He was dressed in a gorgeous uniform, with braid nearly up to his elbow. He displayed himself to us in an armchair of the ship's salon, and there, with pompous gestures, to convey the full importance of his position, consoled us with the information that, "in view of the circumstances", we must carry our baggage ourselves.

Those among us who were the fortunate possessors of dollar notes—the dollar was already becoming, all over the Continent, the most treasured currency—finally persuaded members of the ship's crew to put our luggage on shore. It would be up to us, after that, to procure some kind of

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conveyance to bring us and our chattels as far as Bremen, from whence the journey inland was to begin.

So the sailors set to. But as soon as they touched the trunks they almost shot from their grasp, for, unobserved by crew or passengers, the strikers had greased them!

The situation seemed hopeless until at last, after several hours had elapsed, an agreement was reached between the Company's representative and the workers, and we finally boarded a train for Bremen.

Bremen *Hauptbahnhof* presented a sorry spectacle. Confusion and disorder, carelessness and lack of discipline were manifest wherever the eye turned. Dirt and bits of paper were strewn all over the station, and the platforms were encumbered with shabby wooden stands and haphazard ramshackle booths. The station attendants, porters, and other employees, where they were visible at all, were scornfully indifferent to the requirements of passengers or luggage. Gone was the precise and ordered routine of pre-war days; gone the shining brass, the spotlessly clean platforms, the polished railings, the neat kiosks, and the tidy booking-offices. The disciplined, respectful, obliging, efficient staff: that, too, had vanished.

* * * * *

Owing to the strike, Bremen *Hauptbahnhof* was in a state of confusion.

My first problem was to find where I was to go. I had not dared to send a cable to my wife, fearing that the sudden shock might be too much for her, and fearing that there might be still obstacles to my safe home-coming.

By means of lengthy and extensive telegrams, I finally ascertained that my wife had left Berlin—our house there had been exposed to rifle-fire and stray bullets almost every

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night for months on end in the winter of 1918–19, and had bought a cottage in Upper Bavaria.

This meant that I had to go to Munich, and now I had to face my second problem.

Since the War no such things as the *D-Züge*—the express trains of the good old times—any longer existed; such trains as there were did not run then, owing to the strike.

Out of the mass of confusion, I learnt, at last, that there was one train running to Leipzig; the Committee of the Fair, which was on about then, had, after much negotiation, come to an understanding with the strikers, who had granted a " permit " for a train to run.

Instead of the direct route, which would have taken some half-dozen hours, our train followed a zig-zag itinerary, picking up visitors for the Leipzig Fair. From Bremen we went to Hanover, from Hanover to Magdeburg, from Magdeburg to Leipzig. Then, at last to Munich, scarcely delivered from the Red Terror, from the "Rote Räte" Government, by a *Freikorps* under General von Epp.

Munich!

* * * * *

At Munich *Hauptbahnhof* there was no one to greet me. I went to the telephone office.

" I should like to make a trunk call, please. To ——, in Upper Bavaria."

" A trunk call? " the operator inquired, with a subdued smile. " These foreigners don't seem to realise what a mess we are in," she whispered to her colleague on the next stool. She turned back to me. " A trunk call? Why, that's quite impossible. I suppose you don't know all our telephone material had to be left behind in France and Belgium when our troops had to clear out? "

She was looking very disdainfully at my brand-new

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American suit. Suddenly self-conscious, I looked round me:

"Yes! All these people *are* wearing odd clothes!" I said to myself, "Oh yes! *Ersatz*."

I noticed the suspicious looks directed at the well-dressed "foreigner."

All over the telegraph office notices and decrees were posted up, laying down in detail under what conditions, and after how many proofs of genuine necessity, a new suit might be obtained, provided the *Kleider-Karte* was in order, and "duly stamped."

Yes, obviously, I was a foreigner!

I asked for the *Herr Amts-Direktor*, and endeavoured to convince him I was anything but a foreigner.

"You are telling me you are just come back from the War, *mein lieber Herr*?" He shook his head distrustfully, while I tried to persuade him my story was true.

"Yes, it *is* 1921; and don't I know it! But I assure you I have come straight from enemy country. Here's my proof."

I threw down my "passport."

But this document, which the State Department in Washington had supplied me with, bore not the slightest resemblance to an ordinary German passport. It was a mere *carte d'identité*, endorsed by the Swiss Minister, who still at this time represented German interests in Washington, to ensure that I should at least be *admitted* into Germany. Besides, the confounded document was made out in the English language, and this naturally increased the already profound suspicions of the *Herr Amts-Direktor*.

After some discussion we hit on a compromise, and I was allowed to send my wife a wire.

* * * * *

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CHAPTER III

THE reply to my telegram bore every indication of my wife's surprise at learning that her husband was safely back in Germany.

She was coming to Munich on the following day.

Das Wiedersehen at last!

* * * * *

I trembled: what sort of a *Wiedersehen* was this going to be?

Throughout all that fateful time, beginning with my capture by the British in August 1915, followed by my "delivery" in 1917 to the Americans, and my imprisonment at their hands, it had been my firm resolve to keep fit, and not give in. When periods of depression came on, when grief and despair and hopelessness threatened to get the upper hand, when year after year went by, and grief overwhelmed me utterly, *that* resolve saved me. Again and again the waves of spiritual crises that swept over me found their healthy solution in streams of tears—a sheer physical reaction. My iron determination was victorious: I remained fit, and did not lose my balance.

So now, as if nothing untoward had occurred, and almost rejuvenated by a long retreat into a world so remote from all that had meant life to me, as healthy and strong as before, I stood in the hall of the Regina-Palast-Hotel, waiting to greet and embrace my wife and my child.

"There they are!"

A taxi had just pulled up, and out stepped—— But what was that? A grown-up girl, almost a young woman.

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My little girl, whom I had last seen when we drove to the *Stettiner Bahnhof* in Berlin, in 1915—six years ago!

In my imagination I had a picture of the same body—only a few inches taller, with always the same mould of face; for why should it alter? But the reality? A completely changed, a wholly different face—the face of a stranger.

She knew me; for nurses and governesses had, throughout those years, kept the memory of me alive in her mind, and my photograph had always been before her eyes, faithfully cherished.

The doors swung open, and she came forward; for she was running impatiently a few steps ahead of her mother to see this father of hers again.

I stood there, doubting, hesitating, almost bashful.

I spoke nervously, half-banteringly:

"Is this my child? Not possible. A stranger; it must be a stranger."

The child hesitated in her turn, and I could almost read the thoughts racing through her mind:

"Why doesn't my father rush forward and take me in his arms? Is he a stranger? What has come over him? He seems to behave so differently from what I was told all this time."

She started to cry. She reached out to touch my hand; then hesitated, as though she did not dare. . . .

I, too, wanted to touch her, and did not dare. . . .

Father and child? No: two complete strangers!

I made a few distant remarks while she still cried.

I did not know what to do. I was utterly lost.

The doors swung open once again: my wife took a step forward and—stopped.

The child, seeing her mother hesitate as well, suddenly clung to my arm, as if to help me out of my bewilderment.

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"Is he really my father, this man?" she called to her mother, who seemed so overawed by the question that she too appeared to doubt.

"Your father? Of course it is," she announced at length.

Another outburst of tears. It was inexplicable to me, all this.

My wife's eyes turned upon me; but she hung back.

"Is it possible? Is that you? *Das bist Du?*"

"Of course; why not? What is the matter?"

"Yes . . . but so many times . . . the Swiss Legation, and the Foreign Office . . . they so often declared you were seriously ill. . . . I expected you to look . . . different."

"What? Was I reported seriously ill? What nonsense! Oh, yes! . . . Now it dawns on me"—and I was almost staggered at hearing my own words—"That was nothing but an endeavour to secure an earlier release. We all, in Donington Hall, tried that; so did the Britishers in Germany—don't you see that that was necessary?—and quite a number succeeded. . . . But I expected *you* would understand all that; you knew me; I thought you would see through this. Surely you knew me well enough to know I would carry on; I don't give in so easily! . . . Besides, I had asked Hauptmann von Crailsheim and Hauptmann zu Putlitz, when they left Donington Hall, to go and look you up, and tell you all this, and reassure you, and explain it was nothing but a means to an end."

"Yes; but after you had been in Donington Hall you were taken to the 'Tombs' Prison in New York. That sounded so dreadful! Didn't you suffer terribly there?"

"Oh, no! It wasn't as bad as that. But *you*, you *should* have known me better than that . . ."

I stood there, in the hall, not knowing what to say.

My idea had been to take her almost by surprise, to act as

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if nothing had occurred, as if no such thing as penal servitude and hard labour had ever existed. I wanted that period of my life to be struck out completely, as if it had never been.

All my will-power, all my energy had been concentrated on one thing: to forget. My purpose had been to deny even to myself that these unbelievable things had befallen me.

During my prison days it had proved a wonderful spiritual armour, that I should consciously and unconsciously have insisted that my brain and my mind should simply dismiss it all. That was the only possible remedy, the only solution of the problem how to overcome what fate had inflicted on me throughout those years, the only means of keeping "myself," as it were unscathed in soul and body.

But, as it now turned out, the unexpectedness of my physical appearance—young, alert, elastic as ever—increased my wife's consternation. She, as I was to learn later on, had suffered terribly, and in various ways, from the severe shocks she had received. She looked like one who had barely recovered from sickness. It was almost as though our conditions had been reversed. . . .

After a few moments I recognised the true state of affairs. With Marie-Luise still sobbing, but clinging to my arm, I stepped forward briskly and stretched out my hands towards my wife.

She took one—but she did not grasp it. I saw that she could not overcome her bewilderment, her feeling that it was all the wrong way round; a sense of injustice, perhaps. And at that moment I felt—and I am afraid we both felt—that we had become strangers. . . .

Our hearts remained cold. We seemed to have nothing in common. None of those imponderables that bind husband and wife together made itself felt in either of us.

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There was a gap. And this gap I commenced to fill with conventional talk, with any phrases that chanced to come to my lips. The triviality of all that we exchanged seemed to have a calming effect upon the child.

We walked out of the hotel aimlessly, without any thought of, or desire for, seclusion. We landed in a *Konditorei*, where I found some distraction by chatting with Marie-Luise about what kind of cake or sweetmeat she would prefer.

Small talk was our only means of countering the terrible moment that had come upon us. One, at least, must not be made to suffer: our little daughter; and once she had become a bit accustomed to the strange man, her father, what could be more in order than "*ein Stück Kuchen und eine Tasse Schokolade*"?

She little realised that her new-found father, whose home-coming she had been looking forward to so much, was to pass through her life like a shooting star, and disappear again while her eyes were still dazed.

From time to time her shy looks turned towards this man, who spoke so differently from other men she had heard in her mother's house.

She, too, was expecting that I should be brought on a stretcher; she had been given a few precautionary hints. Now her little mind was unable to grasp how it was that her father should, instead, sit there joking and discussing gaily the merits of fox-trots and quick-steps!

What was actually going on in her father's and in her mother's minds, what a tragedy was being inexorably, so inevitably, unfolded, which would ruin her parents' home and menace her own destiny—that she mercifully could not, at that moment, realise.

How could she know that her father, hardly able to fight down the tremendous emotion which was on the verge of

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overpowering him, was but wearing a mask, and that the *Konditorei* was merely a scene for the first act of this human drama?

* * * * *

Before the riddle of the feminine soul I felt powerless. I was like a drowning man beating wildly with his arms, and by his very struggles drowning all the more surely.

"Where can we go for a dance to-night? What about the 'Odeon's Casino',—or is the band as good at the Regina-Palast-Bar?"

Those words were spoken by me to my wife, not my daughter. And in saying them I committed the most stupendous blunder in all this strained meeting. What possessed me then, I cannot to this day explain. Had I, for a moment, become mad?

She must have thought so; from the terrified expression on her face, I know she did.

Bent on proving that, in spite of all I had been through, I was still the same man as before I left, I had only succeeded in giving her overwrought mind the conviction that five years in prison *had made me mad.*

Three seconds later I would have given worlds to have those words unsaid. I was *not* mad; but for a minute I had lost my head—and how much else besides!

How stupid of me to imagine, even for a moment, that a string band can bring back to life the intimacy of love which too much suffering and too much separation have killed!

How insane, how ill-advised we men can be at times when the soul of a woman is to be conquered or won back!

* * * * *

We left the *Konditorei* and made our way to the *Hauptbahnhof.*

* * * * *

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All the vigour, all the enthusiasm I had stored up in my heart for this first meeting with my wife, was gone.

For years I had been looking forward to it with mixed, even contradictory feelings: joy and anxiety, doubt and confidence, love and fear all mingled. But who could have foreseen that our mutual reactions would be what they were?

Looking back, now, I see that it had, perforce, to be a storm of sheer enthusiasm, in which all conflicting emotions are swallowed up; or else—and that was our sad plight—the six years of enforced separation would prove too much.

* * * * *

In 1915, an English paper, with glaring headlines and a photograph of the officer in question, announced that "Captain von Rintelen had been shot in the Tower of London."

The news reached Germany a few days later, and my wife considered herself a widow.

In Admiralty circles in Berlin there was indignation, and strong representations were made to the American Embassy in London, which, at that time, represented German interests in Great Britain.

Weeks elapsed. As a consequence of the state of war, correspondence had to take a roundabout way in order to reach enemy country, and it was a long time before the opposite side's reply was received. There was the additional reason for delay, that the enemy wished, for purposes of his own in my case, as *The Dark Invader* showed, to withhold information and postpone matters intentionally.

I had been "shot" early in November; it was not till December that my "widowed" wife found she was no longer a widow.

A man might well lose his spirit over the reaction and

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counter-reaction; a woman may *collapse*, and, however great her joy at the glad tidings, the succession of shocks and readjustments will leave an imprint that remains.

Blow after blow, alternating in the same way, was to fall upon this poor woman, on whom was laid the burden of being wife to a man whose war-career was full of such strange incidents, all so much beyond her power to grapple with.

She was the real " martyr " of this " shooting of Rintelen " in the Tower of London. I had been peacefully enjoying the life at Donington Hall, after its inmates, including myself, had celebrated my funeral in the boisterous fashion which seemed natural to us there.

But for her, the recovery from the shock of my supposed death, and its subsequent *démenti*, had meant weeks of spiritual agony, weeks of actual widowhood, and then reversion to a state of mind where I was restored to her only in the imagination, and where the anxieties for my life and welfare were to return as acute as before.

Later, the German press became full of reports that the American Government had on repeated occasions demanded of the British Government that I should be surrendered to them as a " war-criminal."

I believed that the War Office in London would never accede to such a request. It was restrained not only by its sense of decency, but also by motives of political realism; for Germany, then, had three times as many prisoners in her hands as the English.

Efforts were also being made at that time to secure my repatriation. Whenever an exchange of individual prisoners was under consideration, the German Government invariably put forward my name.

I, for my part, was convinced, throughout those negotiations, that no such exchange would be contemplated by the

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British; in fact, their Admiralty had given me several clear hints to that effect. I quite easily resigned myself to the idea that I should stay in Donington Hall as long as hostilities continued, the more so as we then felt confident the War would soon be over. Once more, the sufferer from these alternations of hope and disappointment was my wife.

At last, in 1916, it seemed as if hope would be rewarded. The British and German Governments had arrived at an understanding, on the assumption that eighteen months behind barbed wire was sufficient to render the average prisoner unfit for further military service, and it was agreed that each side should send its prisoners to neutral countries, such as Holland and Switzerland.

My wife immediately got busy: she proceeded to Switzerland, and rented a cottage up in the mountains, where the atmosphere would do me good, and the changed surroundings help the speedy re-establishment of married life and all that a home could mean.

When, by the middle of February 1917, those eighteen months had elapsed for me, both my wife and myself took it for granted—and our own correspondence as well as the notes exchanged between the two War Offices seemed to make it quite clear—that from then on it was only a question of a few weeks, if not days, before I was to be transferred to Switzerland, where we should meet again and spend the remainder of the War in peace and happiness. But month after month passed by and I did *not* arrive in Switzerland.

Then suddenly, in May 1917, the report reached her that I had been delivered over to America by the British. It seemed impossible. She could not trust her eyes when Swiss and German papers confirmed this news, and when finally American reports reached Europe, describing triumphantly how I had arrived in the port of New York,

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in the company of a British Admiralty officer, how I had been handcuffed like a common prisoner, how I had been lodged in the "Tombs" prison in New York.

Both the *Admiralität* [1] and the *Auswärtige Amt* [2] in Berlin stood powerless before this new situation. They gave my wife to understand that since America had joined the War on the Allies' side, even the threat of reprisals could no longer be of any avail, as there were no American prisoners to bargain with.

What this transfer meant for me, I have amply described in my book *The Dark Invader*, to which this is the sequel. . . .

What it meant to my wife, what she had to endure ever since the news had been broken to her that I had been captured by the British, her anxiety about the incredible experiences which were mine, her apprehension when, with trembling hands, she bought from the Zürich kiosks American papers which described the incidents of my trial, harsh enough in fact, with every exaggeration of sensational journalism: her agony at the thought of how many more years it would be before she would see me again—all this can be suffered, but not imagined.

Yet, still another blow was dealt her owing to sensational American journalism. The judge in America, who sentenced me to those years at "hard," had said: "I am sorry that the American law does not permit me to sentence you to what you have deserved, namely, to death." And those sensational journalists had nothing better to do than hasten to the cable office and triumphantly pronounce: "Rintelen sentenced to death." Of course, weeks and weeks elapsed before it could be ascertained, through diplomatic channels, that there was no such thing as "sentenced to death."

For a second time my wife had become a "widow."

[1] Admiralty. [2] Foreign Office.

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Is it to be wondered at if my return, in a future so remote, should cause her anxiety rather than hope, should be worse almost than my death?

Few women have been more tried than my former wife. Few have been so thrown from the extreme of certain hope to the extreme of uncertainty and hopelessness.

She was the real sufferer. A gentle, noble woman, a devoted wife, who, in March 1915, when I was about to embark for America, was filled with sinister forebodings; her more penetrating intuition and more instinctive perception made her alive to the gravity of this mission to America, so strongly urged upon me by the Minister of War in person.

* * * * *

A train, working its way up into the Bavarian Alps, through ever heavier barriers of snow and sleet, carried the three of us towards what, in spite of the disillusionment our first meeting had brought, we still dreamt of as home.

At a tiny halt a sledge stood waiting, the horses stamping impatiently in the icy blast. Beside it a beautiful *Schäferhund* stood barking.

The caravan set out; half a dozen times the sledge threatened to overturn, but after another short hour I saw the cosy lights of a snug cottage, half leaning against the snow-covered rock, half canopied by majestic fir-trees. Once more there was dangled before my eyes the hope that it might grow into a home, after all.

On the hall table a lamp and some candles. On the other side a cheerful fireplace.

Warmth. . . .

Candles were handed round. We went upstairs. Along the staircase were hung etchings, decked with evergreen. . . .

" There is your room, my dear. Good-night."

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Two good-night kisses for Marie-Luise.
Three doors opened.
Three doors closed.

* * * * *

The exquisite beauty of the forests and peaks, covered with glittering snow and radiant sunshine, kept me for a few weeks in those mountains.

My new friend the *Schäferhund*, 'Ado', was overjoyed at having now a faithful companion who, punctually to the minute, made his appearance in the morning ready for a brisk jaunt across country, through forests and over mountain streams.

But 'Ado's' holidays could not last. One morning I took the train back to Munich.

From then on I became only an occasional visitor to the "home"; and the occasions were the three dates in each year which still held the family together: my wife's birthday in May, Marie-Luise's birthday in August, and Christmas.

* * * * *

How could I reach the soul of Marie-Luise? That was the only thing that mattered to me now.

It was not till two years later that the barriers which these sad events had set up between father and daughter were finally broken down, and that a friendship sprang up which has lasted right on till the present time. . . .

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CHAPTER IV

MUNICH, when I arrived there in the spring of 1921, full of depression and despair over what I had just been through, was already showing signs of a return to normal.

The energetic attitude adopted in Bavaria by the newly-created Reichswehr had attracted to Munich a great many people weary with the constant turmoil in Berlin. Gradually, the best elements in Germany seemed to be gathering in the Bavarian capital.

All the Nationalist organisations were then centred in Munich, and it was chiefly there that the Freikorps originated, such as that which was formed to deal with the insurrections in Upper Silesia.

The inhabitants of this much-disputed territory seemed to have misread Wilson's catch-phrase "self-determination," and were indulging in a thorough-going campaign of "self-extermination." The trouble was only ended through the defeat of the Polish insurgents by some of these Freikorps.

The Freikorps, with their vagrant careers, offered a tempting refuge to one whose home had just been broken up. What better could I do than join one of them? Unfortunately for me, however, the fires of the various insurrections all over Germany were already flickering, and soon died down. . . . I found myself once more with nothing to do.

I went to Baden-Baden, and tried to drown my sorrows, and my very feeling, in the gaiety of the life of that watering-place, with its racing, its sport, its club society, and its summer brightness.

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Reichswehrministerium.
Chef der Marineleitung.
A II 2983. Berlin, den 15. April 1921.

Durch Erlass des Preußischen Staatsministeriums vom 29. März 1921 ist Euer Hochwohlgeboren das Eiserne Kreuz Erster und Zweiter Klasse verliehen worden. Die Auszeichnungen und Besitzzeugnisse sind in den Anlagen beigefügt.

Über Ihre erfolgte Beförderung zum Korvettenkapitän der Seewehr wird Ihnen eine Mitteilung bereits zugegangen sein.

Ich benutze die Gelegenheit, um neben meinen persönlichen Glückwünschen auch meiner besonderen Freude darüber Ausdruck zu geben, daß Ihre Kriegsverdienste durch diese äußeren Zeichen die wohlverdiente Anerkennung gefunden haben, der gegenüber andere Äußerungen Sie nicht treffen können. Ich beziehe mich hierzu auf Ihr Privatschreiben vom 28. Februar 1921, für das ich bestens danke.

Ich bitte, den Empfang der Anlagen zu bestätigen.

Behncke

ADMIRAL BEHNCKE'S LETTER ACCOMPANIED BY THE IRON CROSS FIRST AND SECOND CLASS
(for translation see overleaf)

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Reichswehr-Ministerium,
Chief of the Admiralty.

Berlin, April 15th, 1921.

By decree of the Prussian Cabinet Council of March 29th, 1931, The Iron Cross, First and Second Class, have been bestowed upon you. I have pleasure in sending you the insignia with the respective certificates.

I trust that the decree of your promotion to the rank of Naval Commander will have reached you in the meantime.

Let me take this opportunity, not only to send you my own congratulations, but also to express my particular satisfaction that your war-time merits have, by these outward tokens, found their well-deserved recognition. Utterances emanating from other quarters can thus be dismissed as irrelevant. In regard to this, I may refer to your personal letter to me of February 28th, 1921, for which I may hereby thank you.

Will you kindly confirm to me the receipt of the above-mentioned enclosures.

(*Signed*) BEHNCKE
Admiral

TRANSLATION OF ADMIRAL BEHNCKE'S LETTER (*see overleaf*)

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It was in Baden-Baden that I discovered in the pocket of my evening-dress the London tailor's mark, showing my name in full. I had overlooked removing that in 1915, and the British, searching all my clothes in 1915, had not noticed the mark! The two Secret Services were even on that score.

Soon the excitements of the place induced a substitute for happiness. I felt at least free from care, and amused; when, abruptly, a minor incident at a ball in the *Nationale Klub* shattered my precarious high spirits, and depression fell upon me once more.

It was to be the most splendid ball of the season, and an old-fashioned *cotillon* dance had been arranged, for which, as was the custom in Germany, silk ribbons and ties were to be distributed among the couples.

When the moment came for these to be brought in, the doors of the hall were thrown open, and a party of youths, pushing wheel-trays before them, gaily announced that they had found the *cotillon* decorations that had been prepared for the season of—1914, but had never been used.

Those pre-war relics were uproariously acclaimed by the younger set; but for the older ones among us they brought nothing but the memories of the glory passed and hopes belied.

As I left the hall, I saw generals weeping. . . .

* * * * *

Life, however, went on, and soon required my dealing with it. Accordingly, I left for Berlin.

Before I left I was to learn that Admiral Behncke, Chief of the Admiralty in Berlin, had seen to it that I should be awarded the Iron Cross, First Class. In a letter which announced this distinction, he had expressed the Navy's gratitude

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für meine " *Taten* "; and surely, by using such a phrase—" service rendered "—he did not mean to imply that that service had been something " nominal."

But others did—and more. It was to deal with *them* that I decided to leave Munich and go to Berlin. For in Berlin I intended that certain important phases of the War should be brought to light at all costs.

Since the Peace, Berlin had, almost over-night, become little more than an international amusements park. I found, when I got there, that scarcely anybody paid the slightest attention to what a soldier had done during the War. Such matters were wholly foreign to the minds of those then in power. The newly-created authorities lived in a dreamland of ill-understood democracy.

To a man like myself, who had just returned from " the War "—for that is what the prison stood for in my life—the capital, once so proud, appeared to be a lunatic asylum.

* * * * *

Shortly after the War, a Committee, known as the " Reichstag Investigation Committee," and composed of members of the Reichstag, eminent persons versed in politics, jurists and journalists, was appointed to look into the causes, the course, and the consequences of the War.

It was before this Committee that I wished to make my disclosures as to the course of certain secret events in America, and I was determined to obtain a hearing. But in the eyes of the new politicians and bureaucrats, my insistence, it seemed, could only lead to a great waste of time.

" Warfare in America? We have never heard of such a thing. If you will look at the Reichstag minutes, or read the statements which our great democratic Ambassador Count Bernstorff has made before the Investigation Committee, you will find that every point has been settled."

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"Bernstorff a Democrat?" I asked. "Since when? Did he make *that* discovery about himself, in America? Does democracy exclude national feelings? Does it make a man forget the duty a soldier owes to his country? Is democracy a shield for cowardice? If that is how you argue, my dear sirs, then you do not seem to have grasped the spirit of democracy."

I confess I had not expected such cowardice.

From Atlanta I had sent two telegrams to the now important personalities in Berlin; and upon my arrival on German soil I had sent a courteous letter to the President of the Reichstag, requesting that the sabotage activities in America be made the subject of a new discussion. The previous one, I pointed out, had taken place during my absence in prison—where incidentally I had read the full-length reports in American papers. Now that I had returned, perhaps, as the witness chiefly concerned, I might be able to throw some light on certain points which, judging by the evidence published, seemed to require it.

Ably sustained by a series of articles by Count Reventlow, the editor of *Deutsche Tages-Zeitung*, with the headline: "Why so silent, Herr Graf Bernstorff?", I insisted that the President of the Reichstag should call a full-dress debate, now that the witness-in-chief had returned.

It was eventually decided that the Committee would meet towards the end of June 1921. Thanks to delaying tactics on the part of those interested, it had taken me four months of persuasion to get things as I meant to have them!

* * * * *

The interval I spent in paying calls on anybody and everybody in Berlin. I shall mention a few of those I visited—at random, as they come before my mind's eye.

There was Geheimrat Eduard Arnhold, the chairman of

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the Deutsche Waffen- und Munitionsfabriken, who threw his arms round me, and with tears in his eyes, which showed the sincerity of his joy, exclaimed: "If the Kaiser were still here, you would make your entry in state through the Brandenburg Gate."

There was Admiral Behncke, who ran through three anterooms in his eagerness to greet me sooner.

Admiral Zenker, Behncke's Chief-of-Staff, whose son had been shot by mutinous sailors in November 1918, seized me with both hands, and, overwhelmed with joy, blurted out: "Thank God we have got you again—and in such splendid health!"

An exquisite letter came to me from Professor Nicodem Caro, the inventor who, with Professor Haber, by discovering a process for extracting nitrogen from the air, had enabled Germany to hold out during the years of the blockade: "How wonderful it is you should be given back to us! How can we ever express the gratitude we all owe you!"

There were still some fine types left over from the good old days. But there were others who had evolved with the times. . . .

For instance, Herr Heineken, the General Manager of the North German Lloyd, whose patriotism, whose devotion to the Kaiser, and whose courageous enthusiasm for unrestricted submarine warfare, had in 1915 known no bounds, who had unreservedly placed his Company's ships and men at my disposal for the attack against American munitions—was now found complaining rather peevishly of the embarrassment my forceful action in America had caused the German shipping companies. . . .

"This thing may cost us millions, millions, Herr Kapitän!"

"Poor North German Lloyd!"

I left his stately salon at the Hotel Adlon with as con-

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temptuous an expression on my face as I could put on, while his secretary ushered me out with a deep bow.

If I had known then how Herr Heineken behaved in Spa, when the Allies insisted upon the surrender of Germany's entire mercantile marine, I should never have gone to visit him.

He and Kapitän zur See Vanselow had the terrible task of giving an immediate "Yes" or "No" to the Allies' demand,—for such were the methods adopted at Spa in those days.

Vanselow described the scene to me, a few days after my interview with Heineken.

Any objections Vanselow raised during the negotiations, were hardly listened to by his colleague; and when, on the following morning at 10 a.m., the signature of the German delegates had to be affixed to the fateful document, Herr Heineken sent word over the telephone that he was taken ill, and confined to his bed; Kapitän Vanselow had to sign alone, with the result that the Nationalist press in Germany held *him* up as little better than a traitor, and he was forced into retirement. As if he alone, faced with the Allied Naval Commission, could have stood his ground.

But Herr Heineken remained *General-Direktor* of the North German Lloyd.

I called, also, on Herr Doktor Schacht. I had come in contact with him in 1914, when, on instructions from the General Manager of the Dresdner Bank, Dr. Schacht, as its Supervisor of archives and statistics, supplied me, at the Naval War Staff, with data to substantiate the Admiralty's claim that, if unrestricted submarine warfare were *immediately* instituted, England would not be able to hold out very long. . . .

In subsequent years Doktor Schacht became a sort of

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" Press Officer " in connection with banking and similar matters. Thanks to this position, he made the acquaintance of a sufficiently large number of people to enable him to become Direktor of the Darmstädter Bank. I need not add that these varied and exacting tasks had prevented him from joining the colours.

Berlin was now full of upstarts, many of whom held influential positions in Germany and in the Reich Administration. This represented a great change from pre-war days, especially for one who had not seen Germany since the days of her splendour.

Dr. Schacht and I saluted one another, as might two men who had each done their bit—albeit in different ways.

Herr Doktor Schacht began:—

" So you have just come back from America? Hm! Well, you did a good deal of harm to Germany over there."

" How interesting! And who told you that? "

" Don't you know that Ambassador Bernstorff has explained it all before the Reichstag Investigation Committee? "

" Do you think Bernstorff is a reliable witness? And in any case, I don't think it shows much patriotism on his part to besmirch a man who simply did his duty, and carried out his orders, and was still imprisoned for having done so."

" Bernstorff holds an entirely different view of the case," Herr Schacht said. " But did I hear you talk about ' patriotism ' and ' patriotic duty '? " he went on. " Pray do not mention such things; they no longer have any value. They belong to a past which we all hope will never come back. You see, I am a Democrat—like my political friend Bernstorff."

I got up: I had had enough. If Herr Schacht and Graf Bernstorff were in the same political boat, then there was little chance of a reasonable discussion.

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I was not mistaken in my judgment of the man. In the course of the last few years he has changed his coat, chameleon-wise, so many times that he has ended up as the extreme opposite of a Democrat:—he now declares himself a *National-Sozialist*, by conviction. . . .

Not but what he declared in a public speech, only a few months ago, that Germany needed, not diplomats, but characters.

Characters!!

If that was the sort of "character" I was going to meet at the Reichstag Investigation Committee, I made up my mind the sparks would fly!

* * * * *

When the appointed day came, it brought an unpleasant surprise for a good many of those invited. Some even had protested, declaring the President of the Reichstag must be mistaken, as Rintelen was dead. Had not the *Kölnische Zeitung* gone so far as to describe me, in a sort of semi-obituary, as "that tragic figure of the World War"?

The task of receiving me fell upon Dr. Breitscheid, in his capacity as Chairman of the now famous Reichstag Investigation Committee. He was a man well known for his ultra-socialist views; but I must say—give credit where credit is due—that he discharged his duty in the most perfect fashion.

No matter whether Socialist or Conservative, a committee chairman must be impartial. Dr. Breitscheid knew, of course, that I was anything but a Socialist, that I had, in fact, been a very active member of the Conservative Party before leaving Germany in 1915. But, as I entered, he stepped forward, stretched out his hand, and said: "How pleased we are to see you back in such vigorous health! Let me welcome you in the name of the German people."

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A few formalities done with, we went straight to the heart of the matter.

Dr. Breitscheid confirmed to me that my two telegrams of protest from Atlanta, in 1919, had been duly received by the Committee, and that he, as its Chairman, had made himself fully acquainted with the correspondence which had led to the present session of the Committee.

He then turned towards me, and asked:—

"Herr Kapitän, will you please explain to the Committee on what grounds you so vehemently protested against its proceedings?"

I sprang to my feet. I looked about me, and saw that not only the delegate of the official Wolff Telegraph Agency, but also the foreign editors of the leading German newspapers were present. Half a dozen men from the *Auswärtige Amt*[1] were there too. The Army and the Navy were represented by Major Michelis and Kapitän zur See Vanselow, respectively. Further back, and somewhat hidden owing to the darkness of the wall behind them, sat the two former Attachés in Washington and New York, Captain Boy-Ed and Captain Papen.

The Committee and the chief witnesses sat at a horseshoe table, and it so happened that His Excellency the former Ambassador Johann Heinrich von Bernstorff was seated in such a way that I was able to have a good look at him.

The chair just behind his was occupied by my personal friend, the former Imperial Secretary of State for the Treasury, Herr Doktor Helfferich, who nodded to me.

Bernstorff and his friends carefully avoided doing so.

I opened fire.

Slightly on edge to begin with, but gaining composure as I went on, I described the origins of my mission of 1915, of

[1] The Foreign Office.

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that " Campaign on the Manhattan Front," and the almost unbelievable consequences which I alone—at least, of those present—had had to bear.

All listened in breathless silence. Mine was an entirely different tale from that which *der Herr Graf* and his Attachés had told the self-same Committee two years before. It was obvious that most of the members and the press-correspondents had renewed their acquaintance with the minutes of that meeting.

Suddenly I turned from my account of what had happened in America, and, turning to Bernstorff, directed a series of questions at him as to what had occurred in 1915.

" Does His Excellency remember having asked me, through a letter signed by the Naval Attaché, to visit him at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in New York? "

No answer.

" Does His Excellency remember that, in the course of this visit, I requested him not to put to me any questions other than purely formal ones? "

No answer.

" Does His Excellency remember that a cablegram had been received at the German Embassy in Washington, prior to my departure from Berlin in March 1915, stating that I proposed that *no* interview between me and H.I.M.'s Ambassador in Washington should take place? "

No answer.

" Does His Excellency remember that, in the course of the interview at the Ritz-Carlton, he drew up his chair to the sofa on which I was seated, placed his hand upon my knee and said: ' As an Ambassador, I ought to know nothing of this mission, but I keep my life in separate compartments. As from one old soldier to another—tell me all about it '? "

No answer.

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" Does His Excellency remember having written a book " —and here, with a sardonic smile, stressing my words, I added, " *after the War*, *after* the downfall of the monarchy of which he had at all times been such an obedient subject, *after* he had turned Democrat, and in order to make himself agreeable to Wilson's Administration. . . ."

Herr Doktor Breitscheid rose to his feet :—

" Herr Kapitän, I request you to abstain from any remarks about the Heads of foreign governments."

" Herr Doktor, I have read in Democratic and Social-Democratic German papers the vilest remarks about His Majesty the Kaiser, and I see no reason why the Head of a foreign government should receive protection from you when never a single word of protest has been raised by you or anyone else from the Left Wing of the Reichstag, against such abuse of our revered dynasty."

Herr Doktor Breitscheid sat down :—

" Please proceed, Herr Kapitän."

Doktor Helfferich, and a few others in the room, gave me a sympathetic smile. Being at that time in the minority at the Reichstag, they had become accustomed to keeping their mouths shut; for whenever they dared to speak decently of the Kaiser, they were shouted down by Socialists, Communists, Democrats and a few weak-kneed Centrists. It was a joy to them to hear a man openly and successfully proclaiming his convictions.

I resumed, feeling still more composed.

" Does His Excellency remember a book, written by himself, in which it is stated that such a person as Rintelen may have existed, but that His Excellency did not recall ever having met him? "

No answer.

" Does His Excellency remember that on one beautiful

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May morning of the year 1915, he was kind enough to invite me to a luncheon at the Imperial Embassy in Massachusetts Avenue in Washington? "

No answer.

" Does it not strike His Excellency as something rather extraordinary that in May 1915, a complete stranger, a person wholly unknown to His Excellency, should have enjoyed the privilege of his hospitality—not, *meine Herren*, by chance at a big reception, where ' among those present ' a single individual may escape notice in the crowd, but at a luncheon party, with the Princess Hatzfeld presiding over a table of six ' *invités* ' ? "

No answer.

From the place where I stood I noticed that some people, and in particular Boy-Ed and Papen, were whispering to one another, and moving rather uneasily in their chairs.

I continued :—

" Does His Excellency remember, at the end of that *déjeuner intime*, accompanying his unknown guest to the door of his Embassy? "

No answer.

" I am sorry His Excellency does not remember, but fortunately I have here a photograph of that scene, taken, most discreetly, by an enemy agent."

Several people looked up, startled ; but I went on, without heeding the interruption :—

" Would His Excellency, in his capacity as Ambassador Plenipotentiary of His Imperial Majesty, have approved of a discussion, in his presence, of the ' Lusitania ' case, *before persons unknown*, and therefore not exactly trustworthy? "

No answer.

" *Meine Herren*, strange conditions seem to have prevailed,

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in war-time, at *one* German Embassy at least! I think I have said enough to convince you that I had some *a priori* justification for insisting that His Excellency's statements before your Committee in 1919 and 1920 deserved a second hearing, and that I should be allowed an appeal from your Committee to your Committee. . . .

"But now that I have proved the point, I mean to go a good deal further! You all know our good old German proverb—*Wie der Herre, so's Gescherre*—like master, like servant. Over in that corner sits a man, the former Military Attaché to His Excellency, Captain von Papen. In case you should have forgotten, let me remind you that, reading from his record during the War, he shines as a guardian of official documents. Not content with permitting the secret cypher-code to disappear from his office in New York, not content with having his trunks, which were filled with papers from his 'safes' in New York, seized by officers of the British Government, who had not intended his diplomatic 'safe conduct' to apply to these trunks, this gentleman saw fit to carry about with him in Palestine still more official documents—with the result you can guess. . . .

"Well, Captain von Papen has also made statements before your Committee about what went on in America during the War, corroborating those of His Excellency . . . and I am given to understand these two gentlemen had been sworn in by your Committee. . . .

"To put it shortly, and I have no reason to mince my words any longer, as neither of them has seen fit to answer me—and it is obvious, *meine Herren*, that I know what I have been saying—I hereby formally charge His Excellency the former German Ambassador in Washington with perjury in at least six instances, and I make the same charge against that

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pitiful creature over there, whom the American press has called 'the clown of three continents' . . ."

A tremendous uproar answered my indictments, with shouting and gesticulating on all sides. Some Democratic and Centre members, though they had listened to my impeachment quietly enough, felt they had to protect the two, because they happened to be members of their parties.

"So partisanship protects perjury, in our new Germany!" I thundered.

Another outburst. I heard one man observe:—

"Are we to have a lesson in political manners from this returned war-criminal?"

Herr Doktor Breitscheid rapped on the table:—

"Calm yourselves, *meine Herren*," and then, turning to me, he said:—

"Herr Kapitän, things cannot go on like this before such a forum as our Committee; it appears to me a case rather for a libel-suit before the proper courts."

"What! A libel-suit?—I tell you this is a case for the Public Prosecutor, and I am wondering why you do not put these men under arrest. The crime of perjury calls for no less!"

"Herr Kapitän, if you bring matters to a head in this way, then I see no object in this Committee proceeding any further. Is that what you want?"

In the general uproar, which had, by now, become livelier than even I had anticipated, only one man remained completely calm: that truly excellent man, His Excellency Doktor Helfferich.

He made a sign to me.

I crossed over to where he stood. Dr. Helfferich took me by the arm, and ushered me into an adjoining room.

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"My dear fellow, you are perfectly right. But you have been only a few months in the new Germany, and you do not realise how completely demoralised all these people are. If you had heard how they shouted Hindenburg and myself down, when we had to appear before this Committee two years ago, you would not have trusted your ears—or eyes. The powers that be are so partisan, to the exclusion of men like you and me; they are all so different in their attitude and their outlook from what you were used to, that you had better reconcile yourself to the fact that there is no justice to be expected from these people, and that Papen and Bernstorff are simply sheltering under this mad cloak of democracy."

"But, Your Excellency, I find myself in an impossible position; and you will see soon enough what the consequences of my 'reconciling' myself to all this must inevitably be."

"Well, then, I appeal to your patriotism. And in any case, if these things are to be brought to light, it must not be before the present Committee; I do not consider Breitscheid the proper person. . . . Kapitän Rintelen, you are rendering your country a supreme service, if you let this matter drop! Times will change."

"If you appeal to my patriotism, Your Excellency, then not another word . . ."

The Reichstag Investigation Committee adjourned *sine die*, after issuing, through the Wolff Agency, the vaguely worded and almost ridiculous statement that a compromise had been reached between Bernstorff and Rintelen!

Apart from this, not a word about the proceedings was allowed to appear in the press; whereas Count Bernstorff's and Papen's statements, in 1919 and 1920, had received the widest publicity.

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READ THE TRUTH ABOUT RINTELEN

BEGINNING TO-MORROW IN

THE TRUTH about who he was.
THE TRUTH about what he did.
THE TRUTH about the money it cost him.
THE TRUTH about his release from the Atlanta Penitentiary.

Order from Newsdealer TO-DAY

CUTTING FROM "NEW YORK TIMES," DECEMBER, 1920

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The "hushing up" process had begun—with what devastating consequences, the reader will later see.

The Nationalist press was by no means unanimous in approving of the course I had adopted.

But, then, I could not explain to all and sundry what had passed between Dr. Helfferich and myself; and certain parts of the Committee's minutes had been deleted anyhow! By whom? I asked myself!

* * * * *

If this was new Germany, if this was new Berlin, then it was no place for me.

There was complete demoralisation in political circles.

The men I pitied most were the few generals and admirals who, in the most trying circumstances, and with all the odds against them, with enemies within the Reich and beyond its frontiers, had to bear the brunt of all the charges and accusations over the lost War. In spite of all, they remained at their posts, trying to save what could be saved; and in spite of never-ceasing and ever-increasing vexations from the Inter-Allied Naval and Military Commissions, they persevered in the attempt to build up what could be built up, after the proud old Army and Navy had been scattered and shattered.

The behaviour of the Ultra-Radicals—who styled themselves Spartacists and, occasionally, Communists—was at times so outrageous that the Conservatives were actually obliged to turn for help against them to the once-despised Social-Democrats. The good-class *bourgeoisie* sat around with folded hands. And just as in allied countries a reaction had set in from the perpetual dance with death, so here the youth went over to what seemed to be a perpetual dance, to the tunes of American-made jazz.

That was proud Berlin! That was Prussia! That was

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Germany, once known throughout the world for orderliness and rigid codes of social life! These were the fruits of the November Revolution.

* * * * *

There was one part of Germany, however, where a man of my mettle could, perhaps, render useful service; on dangerous ground, as once before,—in the Occupied Area, the Rhineland.

Much of what was actually going on there, behind the scene at least, remained either obscure to the Central Authority in Berlin, or was carefully hidden from their knowledge.

Would I be willing to go there, for an indefinite period, keep my eyes and ears open, and report, as often as feasible in the circumstances, to the *Reichskanzlei*, or rather to some *Deck-Adresse* in the suburbs of Berlin that was indicated to me?

It was at the instigation of Doktor Helfferich, the last of the Imperial Secretaries of State for the Treasury, that this question was put to me, and I answered gladly with a "yes."

From that time on, once again, I was in personal communication with this truly excellent man, until—alas!, he found a tragic death by being burned, in 1925, when a fire broke out on a train passing through a tunnel in Switzerland.

Germany was thereby robbed of one of her best sons, and one more of her most far-sighted statesmen. Unthinkable what part *he* might still have played in her destinies!

* * * * *

On the 1st of July, ten days after the meeting of the Reichstag Investigation Committee, I took a train for Cologne, straight into the heart of the "Occupation."

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Here, in the Rhineland, I knew I could make myself useful to my country, at a time when everything in the Unoccupied Territory—for such was the name by which Germany was described in proclamations issued by the Rhineland High Commission—was in a state verging on chaos.

Nothing more disgusted those living in the Occupied Area, who had to bear the brunt of all that foreign militarism then meant, than to witness the internal strife which was tearing the Reich almost to pieces; the antagonism between Prussia and the Southern Free States, as they now styled themselves, the antagonism between the post-war professional parliamentarism and the remnants of the former ruling classes, the antagonism between Socialists and Catholics, Democrats and Monarchists, and the corruption and profiteering which accompanied the rising inflation of the German currency.

Disputes as to whose had been the guilt for the loss of the War added to the general dissension. Disputes between politicians and the former Army Command, with disastrous consequences for the newly-created Reichswehr. Disputes between the two schools of thought, the one which argued that the Marne disaster had been the cause of the collapse; the other, that it was the demand for an armistice which had undermined the morale of the Army, and, as a consequence, that of the population at home, giving an opportunity for subversive elements to arise. Disputes between Army men and Navy men still further poisoned the atmosphere, the former attacking the latter and alleging that they had not known how to maintain discipline, with the result that the *Matrosen-Revolte*—the mutiny in the Navy—had become possible. Add to this, a continuous controversy whether it was the Army that had under-estimated the Tanks, or the Navy that had over-estimated the U-boats!

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And this inner disruption not only made the spectacle sadder from day to day, but also increased the difficulties of attempting to maintain an intact Germany in the face of Franco-Belgian ambitions, aspirations and allurements.

On numerous occasions we in the Rhineland, or Occupied Area, had, for lack of any clear policy on the part of the then Reich Government, to come to decisions of our own. Attempts were made in Berlin, of course, to keep in touch with us, opposed as we were to the erection of an independent Rhineland, the more so as Great Britain, in 1922, through her Prime Minister, had declared herself openly against the pursuance of ideas which were, according to her views, likely to lead to the birth of a political freak.

Under the disguise of a neutral commercial traveller, a delegate from Berlin arrived in Cologne, with instructions to watch what was going on and to try to keep in communication with Berlin as regularly as possible. I had a hearty laugh after I had been rung up and came to the Dom-Hotel, to find that the commercial traveller was no other than Dr. Bracht, at that time Counsellor in the *Reichskanzlei*, whom I had known from student days—the same Dr. Bracht who was to become, in 1932, the Prime Minister for Prussia. My meetings with him bore a strange resemblance to my secret conclaves of saboteurs in New York in 1915. . . .

The buffer-state idea fascinated the minds of Germany's western neighbours, and guided the action of their military commanders. Clearly, they considered the demilitarised zone of fifty kilometres to the east of the Rhine was not sufficient guarantee, in view of the importance of what was left of a central executive in Germany proper.

The British Army of Occupation, and the American one too, for that matter, cautiously abstained from overt inter-

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ference in the political issues at stake, and the Anglo-American troopers confined themselves to wholesale flirtation with German girls, who, owing to the blockade, had almost forgotten what the delicacies of material life meant. "Chocolate for promenade" was the customary *entrée en matière.*

It went otherwise with the French: the mere idea that an innocent kiss might be followed by something like a demand for political concessions, was sufficient to frighten the two sides into keeping apart, and mutual hostility grew deeper, and was intensified from day to day. The French and Belgians never succeeded in getting nearer the hearts of the Rhenish people; the disillusionment over this failure made them ever more aggressive, while the German population, on its side, became ever more hostile.

Admittedly, it was far easier for the British and Americans to overcome the war-spirit. Their final departure was almost regretted, as though they had arrived as invited guests. *Their* countries had not been invaded or occupied, their villages and towns had not been shot to pieces in the course of four years of hostilities. To them, being carried through miles and miles of devastated countryside, was not much more than sight-seeing; whereas such spectacles again and again opened up old wounds in the hearts of the *poilus.*

The Belgians, again, had been smarting for fully four years—the little nation pitted against the giant—under a military administration which became harsher and more irksome the longer the War lasted. Small wonder if they, in particular, who saw no political advantages accruing to them from the Great Conflict, felt unable to realise sympathetically that the German population too had gone through unbelievable hardships. To the Belgians and to the French soldiery, the Germans were, and remained, *the invaders*; whereas the

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British and Americans had looked upon them merely as *opponents*, and even that feeling was dying down.

* * * * *

Such was the atmosphere of the environment into which I had gone; my feelings were full of disgust over what I had had to witness in post-war Berlin, and grief over the misfortune fate had brought on me personally. . . .

Had I gone to the Sahara or the North Pole, I could not have been more cut off from everything German than I was in the Rhineland during the severe period of the Occupation and the Separatist Movement. No one who has not lived through the strain of that time can form an idea of how completely communications of every kind had been interrupted, to what extent the Occupied Area resembled a box hermetically sealed. Each town was as much cut off from the others as the Rhineland was from the rest of Germany. To travel from the British zone into the French zone required a special visa which one could obtain only by applying to the French headquarters, either in Coblenz or in Mainz. Letters had to be carried by private couriers, and for a long time telegrams and trunk calls were forbidden.

You could, after observing half a dozen formalities, travel from Cologne to Berlin. But how suspect you were if you attempted the return journey! It was sheer good luck that I succeeded in slipping through as often as I did; and I always ran the risk of being sentenced to so many weeks imprisonment, and a fine. But even that seemed more tolerable than the red-tape procedure involved when one endeavoured to obtain an *Übergangs-Visum*; the duration of such a procedure was alone sufficient to drive one mad, and the process itself became more complicated the tighter the ring of steel around the Rhineland was drawn.

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Oh, the sigh of relief every time I accomplished the difficult task of persuading *un gendarme* or a red-capped "M.P." that my journey was of a peaceful nature!

* * * * *

I had, in the meantime, joined a banking firm in Cologne. There were, just then, so many opportunities for making lucrative transactions, that most of the British and French banks had decided to open branches in the Occupied Area, and we felt that we ought not to let the profits, which the existing conditions made possible, all cross the frontier and leave Germany for good and ever.

* * * * *

With the Allied commanders, in so far as I came in touch with them, I personally got along fairly pleasantly.

One of them, the *Commandant-en-Chef* of the Army Corps at Düsseldorf, permitted me to tell him quite frankly what I thought the future relations between the two countries were to be, if the French carried on as they had done up to then. It was at tea in the house of Frau von Guérard.

She had described to him something of what I had gone through during the War, and I can but say that, in spite of the tension of those days, he shook my hand warmly, and said some very fine words, well befitting a soldier. I think that if that gentleman had had his way in Paris, and not the generals surrounding M. Poincaré, things might have taken a different course.

A few months before this meeting with the French General, . . . I had had a slight encounter with the General-in-Command of the Belgian Army of Occupation, in charge of the most northern Sector of the Occupied Area.

The breeders of thoroughbreds of the Lower Rhine had organised a great race-meeting, and two visitors' stands had been erected, carefully "dividing the sheep from the goats,"

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of whom I was one. Several races, instead of ending as they ought, led to a break-out, and in each case near the same spot: where a group of chattering and gesticulating young Belgian soldiers were resting on the inner side of the course; each time their enthusiasm over some horse's place carried them away so much that they waved their caps, with the inevitable result that the whole crowd of horses shied, and the finish was spoilt.

No one dared to say anything, and the Turf Committee found themselves at a loss how to go about it, with those sacrosanct troops of Occupation.

I could not forget my old sense of what sport meant and required of all present, and it did not seem to me that the situation called for more than a reasonable reminder to those nice young Belgians. My instinct was right; a few words, in courteous French, and the young N.C.O., the senior of the lot, quickly rose to his feet and clapped his hands, thereby giving his subordinates to understand that they should follow him off the course, to a suitable place which I indicated to him.

But I had counted without the General-in-Command.

I walked back to our stand, glad to have solved, at a moment's notice, with the young Belgian's aid, what had appeared to the Germans around me something insuperable.

But my friends in the stand had forebodings of evil which quickly became realities.

A few minutes later, a well-dressed Belgian subaltern, proudly wearing the *aiguillettes* of an A.D.C., walked up to me, and, not knowing whether I could speak his native language, addressed me in impeccable German:—

"*Der Herr Kommandierende General wünscht Sie zu sprechen.*" (The G.O.C. wishes to speak to you.)

Was he to congratulate me on my sportsmanship, or on

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the success of my appeal to the sportsmanship of the young N.C.O.?

I walked across to the stand reserved for the Belgian officers, took off my hat, and stood properly to attention before the grey-haired old gentleman, whom my evident tranquillity, however, had already so upset that his face was nearer blue than red.

"How dare you give instructions to my men? Don't you know that it is strictly forbidden to speak to members of our Forces?"

"What nationality are you?" he asked suddenly, breaking in on his own questions.

So he was in doubt whether he had not made a mistake altogether . . . and was very evidently vexed at having had doubts over this question, when I calmly replied in French:

"I am a German."

"Have you served in the War?"

"*Oui, mon général.*"

"So you have been fighting my country?"

"Not for a single moment, *mon général.* My interest was exclusively concentrated upon the British and Americans."

"*Danke sehr!*" he thereupon shouted at me, after a moment's pause. . . .

Was he particularly well acquainted with German military habits, that he should thus speak to me in the very phrase a senior officer would use in dismissing a junior? Or was he thanking me for having set matters right about the race-course? Or did he, like so many other Belgians and French, "love" the English and the Yankees so much?

In any case, when I came back, my friends were dumbfounded that I had not been led away, under escort, to some military prison

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CHAPTER V

1922 came round, and brought no alleviation to the Rhineland; conditions became, in fact, visibly worse.

On the political side it became evident that the French and Belgian desire to establish a buffer-state, by making the Rhineland and the Palatinate, plus the Saar, an independent unit, was daily taking a more concrete shape. What form such a state should assume, once its independence from the main body of the Reich was proclaimed, appeared to be a source of friction, not only among the Allied military commanders, but also between the *Haute Commission Interalliée* and the Separatist elements scattered among the Rhenish populations.

Some went so far as to speak of a "Catholic State" as against a "Protestant Reich"—a state which was to include all of Bavaria and Austria. Others, who realised the monstrosity of such a creation, were more modest and more moderate; they confined their illusions to a barrier-state, which would divide South Holland from Germany, protect Belgium against a renewed invasion, and fulfil the dreams of Richelieu's successors, so far as purely French interests were involved.

A third group, evidently inspired by crass military considerations, thought of keeping, under military control only, certain portions of the German territory—to wit, Hesse and Nassau, and part of the Palatinate; this territory would serve as a permanent spear-head, directed, along the *Main-Linie*, towards Czecho-Slovakia, and making it possible

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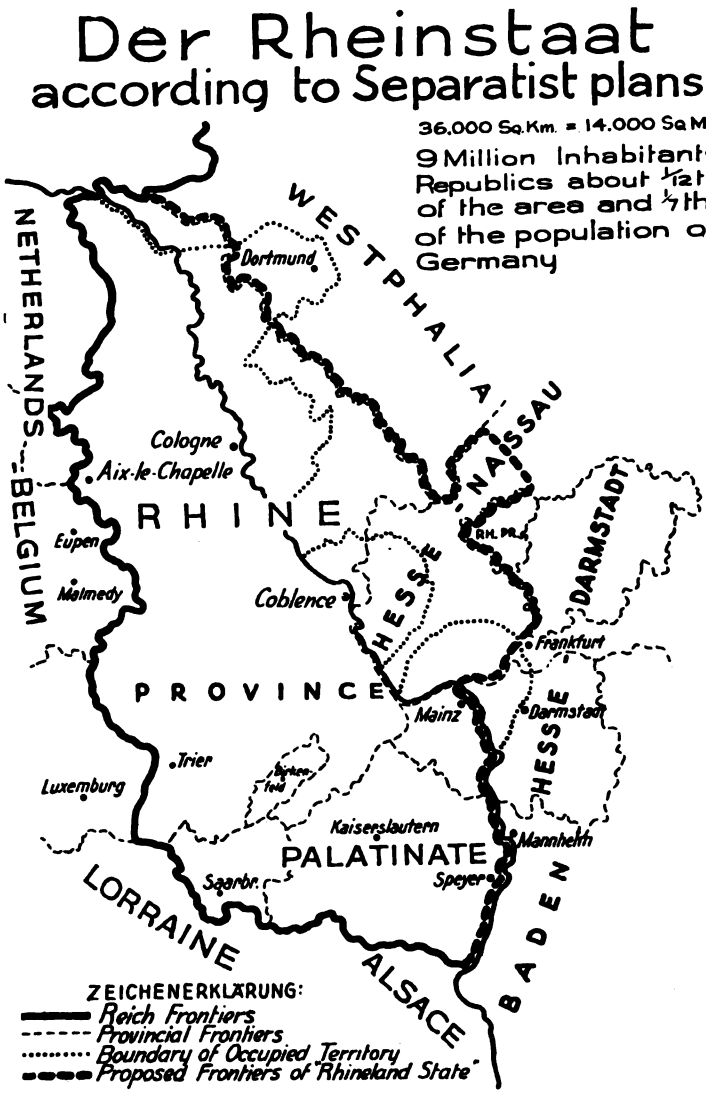

THE SEPARATISTS' PROPOSED RHENISH BUFFER-STATE

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for an invading allied army quickly and effectively to cut off the south of Germany from the north. This was, obviously, a sound strategic idea, and was kept alive until long after the Ruhr Occupation was over.

A depressing observation one made was, that Separatist ideas and notions found many adherents among *bourgeoisie* classes, who were convinced that the increasing inflation of the Reich currency would mean ruin to the wealth of the Occupied Area. It was, therefore, all the more amazing and gratifying to note that the political instinct of the labouring classes, whether Communist, Socialist or Christian-Democratic, remained strongly opposed to any disruption of the Reich. Thus the victims of a policy tending towards Separatism, which was, at times, carried out rather violently, were, in the main—except for the government, railway and municipal officials, who were expelled *en masse*—labourers, artisans, and smallholders. Only comparatively few members of the *bourgeoisie* were chased across the border formed by the *cordon* of Allied troops. The mainstay of the opposition to all the manœuvres, overt and underhand, that were designed to split off the Rhineland from the Reich, was organised labour.

* * * * *

In June of this year, 1922, special editions of the Cologne papers brought news which had the effect of a bomb-shell, among friend and foe alike:—it was that of the violent death of Doktor Rathenau.

The murder of Rathenau was one of the greatest of post-war tragedies. While driving from his home to the Auswärtige Amt, of which he had now been chief for some time past, with outstanding success, Doktor Rathenau was assassinated by a number of hot-heads who could not bear the idea that a Jew should be Germany's Foreign Minister.

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The Russo-German Treaty of Rapallo, which Rathenau had brought about, was a masterpiece of diplomacy, even if, in years to come, the value of this agreement with Russia diminished, and even in spite of the fact that more recent developments have brought Russia within the orbit of French high politics.

That a handful of young men, angry about this success of Doktor Rathenau, a success which gained him the admiration even of the hostile Allied countries, should have gone to the length of murdering him just to gratify their fanatical anti-semitism, and with the object of demonstrating that a Jew could not be a German patriot, will for ever remain incomprehensible to Western Europe.

One of the most absurd of all charges against Doktor Rathenau was that, as a Jew, he had played Germany's fortunes into the hands of foreign capitalists! But would a man so disposed inspire and initiate a far-reaching agreement with capitalism's deadliest enemies, the Russian Bolsheviks?

Doktor Rathenau was the wealthy son of a wealthy father. Rathenau senior had been, for many years, chairman of the A.E.G., the "General Electric Company" of Germany, and at the outbreak of the War, Rathenau junior found himself in the same position.

When, in autumn 1914, the War began to "settle down," it was none other than General von Falkenhayn personally who asked Doktor Rathenau to undertake the tremendous task of concentrating and preserving all the raw materials that Germany possessed. H.M. the Kaiser himself wrote a letter, couched in the most gracious terms, to Doktor Rathenau, expressing how well he had deserved of his country.

I know, from my personal acquaintance of him, which had grown deeper during the first winter of the War, that

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he was not seeking material advantages for himself. He had a fortune of his own, and I was glad to notice that one of the first decrees against the sinister spirit of war-profiteering had been signed by him in his new capacity. And in what high esteem he was held by his former enemies is best illustrated if I quote Count Sforza, for a long time Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who recently wrote:

> "Were Rathenau still alive he would have been 'eliminated' by his Vaterland, no matter how proud he was to be a German. I have known him well personally, and found that at times he was even too zealous an adherent of *Deutschland über Alles*."

* * * * *

Readers in Britain will no doubt ask of me in this connection to what cause I ascribe the present-day wave of anti-semitism in Germany.

My best reply is to repeat what, in 1927, a dignified scholar and inventor, of Jewish origin, whose family had for many generations lived in Germany, told me quite frankly, when we discussed the first indications of anti-Jewish tendencies:

"It is the *Ost-Juden*, the masses of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, who have flocked into Germany, that will endanger the position of the old-established Jewry in our country."

This remark made a profound impression upon me.

I have found it to be true, when reviewing practically all the great financial scandals, the cases of corruption, which so aroused public opinion in Germany during the years after the War.

In every instance Jewish names, wholly unknown in pre-war days, were mentioned in long-drawn-out lawsuits, where a

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mass of filth and dishonesty was brought to light. It is also true, beyond any doubt, that members of the Government, or other men of influence in public life, were, in almost every instance, connected with those outrageous cases.

It had become proverbial, in post-war Germany, that, whenever mean and disgraceful affairs were cited, an Ost-Jude *and* a prominent figure in public life, if not several, were involved.

Scandal followed upon scandal; corruption was heaped upon corruption. Quite frequently the affair was, somehow or other, hushed up, and it transpired afterwards that some greasy hand had greased another's hand.

Another demoralising factor, to add to this never-ending spectacle, was the temptation which the national catastrophe of the inflation brought in its train.

* * * * *

The Reich-mark, gradually called the paper-mark, rose by leaps and bounds in comparison with the dollar and sterling, and yet, it was as late as 1922 that the Supreme Court in Leipzig finally pronounced: "*Mark gleich Mark*" (Mark equivalent to Mark). According to this ruling, a mortgage, made in pre-war time when the Reich-mark had its full gold value of about one shilling in gold, could be redeemed in paper-marks to the same amount, and the paper-marks had to be accepted at their nominal value, so that a mortgage of say 50,000 gold-marks was, under the law, now to be considered as equal to one of 50,000 paper-marks.

The British Army of Occupation were in those days the most envied persons in Cologne, and they no doubt look back with a feeling of sadness to those "happy days." A Tommy with half-a-crown in his pocket could buy an entire *Bier-*

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Garten, and stand the whole assembly as many drinks as they liked into the bargain! Who would have thought that, ten years later, the world depression would cause some fifty British ex-service men, who had married German girls, to find themselves on the dole in the self-same Cologne?

* * * * *

Small wonder that, in particular, Galician Jews of low extraction and still lower morality, drew on themselves still greater hatred than the good Germanic profiteers. For the Galician was the new-comer; he was the Jew, and, with his proverbial thrift, knew how to live on the fat of the land, on the sweat and misery of the small German *bourgeoisie*, and how to send his children to the better-class schools, at a time when the better-class Germans had to let theirs take up inferior positions; he was considered a parasite who sucked the blood of honest Germans.

Anti-semitism is the harvest reaped from what those parasites have sown, and the old German families of Jewish extraction have had to pay for the misdeeds of those new-comers. But a crude and cruel anti-semitism did not pause to draw such distinctions.

Profiteering out of the inflation was, however, not confined to the Jewish newcomers alone. The law courts in subsequent years were overwhelmed with actions brought by Gentile against Gentile as well. Besides, it was by no means in all cases through *mala fides* that flagrant injustice had occurred; as often as not it was due to the complications caused by the extremely rapid rise of the gold-exchanges as against the paper-mark, accelerated further by events such as the Rathenau murder in 1922, and the Ruhr occupation in 1923.

* * * * *

Gross negligence, and often red tape, which is not exactly

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an instrument of quick action, played their part too, in causing terrific losses, and, in some cases, with grotesque results.

My own case, for instance, is eloquent of what depreciation on the one hand, and officialdom on the other, can do.

When I returned to Germany in 1921, I had arrears of salary owing to me from April 1917, when I had ceased to be paid the regulation salary as prisoner-of-war "attached" to His Majesty's Forces.

These arrears were not so quickly forthcoming from Berlin as they should have been, and one day I wrote to the Treasury Department, caustically observing "*Ein Unbemitteler wäre inzwischen Hungers gestorben*"—("A man without private means would have died of starvation in the interval").

Yet, I could "sympathise" with the bureaucracy on the Wilhelm-Platz in Berlin. The official mind dislikes matters that cannot be fitted into categories. There was no rule or article to fit such a case as mine: a *Kapitän-Leutnant* in the old Imperial Navy, who was claiming pay for four years, spent doing hard labour in an American prison—where he could, so they argued, not be regarded as being on active service, nor as being a prisoner-of-war; but who, yet, was claiming pay for active service seen during further two years *after* the War had ended!

Volumes of correspondence were written to the authorities engaged in winding up what had been the Imperial Navy.

The Naval War Staff, where I had served, was no longer in existence; "Versailles" had seen to that.

So now I had to dig out some men who might at least remember what had been going on at the Naval War Staff, from where I should still be drawing my salary, had it not been for an occurrence which, by 1922, had evidently not yet

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come to the knowledge of the secluded quill-drivers:—I mean the War.

"Once upon a time, there was a Great War. . . ."

How often I had to begin my inquiries about this nightmare of theirs, the question of my salary, with that explanation!

The whole of the year 1921 was used up in deliberation and head-shaking over my case, and the year 1922 was approaching its end when even my patience became aware that it was being a bit tried. In ordinary circumstances I should have been disposed to wait. But by October 1922 the inflation was making rapid progress.

The first reply to my application had been:

> "Inasmuch as the War came to an end in 1919, there is no legal foundation for your claim for pay until 1921."

I saw to the "legal basis" being quickly found! The wording of my answer left no doubt as to that.

Their second reply ran as follows:—

> "The Treasury does not see its way to granting you *Tagegeld* as from the date of the signing of the Peace Treaty in 1919."

Inasmuch as *Tagegeld* was an additional pay, the daily allowance granted to an officer for the period of hostilities, it was, therefore, evident that, since summer 1919, I had been engaged in a war of my own against the United States of America!

Such was the tenor of my pretty stiff answer.

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Third reply:—

B. Nr. H. 1845. *Kiel, October* 10, 1922.

". . . You fell into enemy's hands, while carrying out instructions of a military-political nature, issued by the Admiralty Staff and the War Ministry during the course of the War.

In view of the peculiar nature of your instructions, you were not entitled to claim treatment as a prisoner-of-war; on the contrary, you had to submit to the regulations applying to those subject to the regulations of the American Penal Code.

. . . Your statements both as regards the instructions given to you by the Admiralty Staff and the War Ministry, and as regards your capture, which was due to careless handling of the cipher-code, are confirmed by the officer in charge of your affair, as during the War he was on the Staff of the High Seas Fleet.

As regards your pay, you are thus entitled to the following:—

I. War-time salary, from May 1917 to Jan. 1919	7,560 M.
II. Peace-time salary, from Feb. 1919 to March 1920 . . .	10,806 M.
III. According to new regulations for peace-time salary (in view of beginning inflation) as from April 1920 until and including January 1921	16,720 M.
	35,086 M.

After this amount has been paid to you, no other restitution can be made to you, or to those who, during the years in question, supplied you with funds."

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So I had it then in writing, duly signed and sealed: the admission that from the outset, that is, from the moment when I received instructions of a "military-political nature," those who gave instructions were aware that all and sundry had something more "sinister" in mind!

Do not forget that admission:—Penal Code! That will play an important part yet in this story.

In the meantime, the month of November 1922 had come round, bringing a very unkind American dollar. This had risen—or, if you prefer, the mark had fallen—to the rate of 7,500 marks to the dollar. I had, then, the proud satisfaction of finding myself the possessor of about four dollars salary for four years "hard"; a whole dollar a year!

I invested my four dollars in a good bottle of *Veuve Clicquot*, yellow label of course, and drank to the health of the Treasury, at its own expense.

* * * * *

The year 1922 was to end with a dark cloud appearing on the American horizon—much "darker" than the Berlin bureaucracy's argumentations and findings about salary and the like.

Mr. George Gordon Battle, the New York advocate who undertook my defence in 1917 and 1918, sent me a most courteous letter, inquiring if I could ascertain whether his letter dealing with the question of his fee for my defence, dated some time in 1921, had by any chance deviated into the official waste-paper basket.

I felt ashamed that the Finance Ministry and the Auswärtige Amt between them had not considered it a special point of honour to remit, by return mail, whatever fee Mr. Battle suggested as due to him for having defended, without regard for what foolish critics in America had to say about his doing so, a German officer in war-time.

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The year 1921 had ended, and no answer had been posted by Berlin.

Was the year 1922 also to go by without this stain on Germany's name being removed?

My annual Christmas greetings to Mr. Battle were not sent without the expression of my feeling of humiliation, to which this fine old gentleman immediately retorted:

"Never a penny from you; it is the German Government, and its envoy plenipotentiary in 1915, that I have defended during the War. Will you please convey this to whom it may concern?"

For, strange to say, when I forwarded Mr. Battle's request to the Auswärtige Amt, I was given to understand that my defence was to be paid for—by me!

I suggested to the Auswärtige Amt that if they would only give me a solution to the arithmetical problem of how to pay Mr. Battle $10,000 for the services rendered by him, out of the $4 kindly paid me for the services rendered by me, then I should certainly feel in honour bound to take this responsibility upon my shoulders as a moral one, since the legal responsibility had been so astutely defined as "not resting upon the Reich Government."

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CHAPTER VI

THE year 1923 opened for Germany in an atmosphere of unprecedented gravity. The most serious portent was the threatened proclamation of a Rhenish Republic, which would have marked the end of German unity.

The already large military contingents maintained in the Rhineland did not appear sufficient in the eyes of the French Government. Coupled to the fear that the factions within Germany, which were at present struggling against one another, might join to turn against France, was the anxiety of those in power in Paris, lest payment of the Reparations might be endangered owing to the rapid depreciation of the German currency.

They argued therefore that they must seize " real assets," or *Sachwerte*, as they were called in Germany; this meant objects of intrinsic value, at least as compared with the dwindling currency of the Reich, and in view of the increasing drain on the Reichsbank's gold reserves.

Little did Paris realise that such forceful action, severely opposed by London, was certain to defeat its own ends.

It would ill befit me to indulge in recrimination a decade after the event; besides, the French Government realised soon enough the disastrous results that its policy was having. But my impressions of those days are so vivid that they are worth relating, dispassionately.

In January 1923, a commission of French and Belgian mining engineers was dispatched to examine the situation

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in the Ruhr, with a view to obtaining in kind what evidently became more and more unobtainable in good currency.

Troops of the two countries were to protect this "commission of engineers."

Clashes with a population, heretofore unused to an occupation, inevitably occurred; and the foreign troops, by now all too accustomed to submission on the part of civilians, grew more nervous from day to day.

Conditions gradually became intolerable, and the famous "Passive Resistance," urged by Rhinelanders and Ruhrlanders alike, was now formally ordered and proclaimed by the Central Authority in Berlin, and vigorously carried out by the provincial and local authorities.

The whole population joined in, and showed incredible endurance, all parties co-operating with magnificent enthusiasm. Again, from Catholic and Jew to Atheist, from Communist to Nationalist, there was a wave of genuine patriotic unanimity, a wave such as Germany had not known since August 1914.

But the two stricken provinces stood alone; for in Berlin the Reichstag parties, heedless of the struggle in the West, went on tearing each other to pieces, without achieving any clear policy.

In the meantime, the American dollar, which gradually had become the basic currency for all international deliberations, had, by June 1923, reached an exchange value of 100,000 paper-marks!

Each further fall of the mark led to disastrous economic consequences in the Occupied Area, and these, in their turn, reinforced French hopes of a permanent separation of the left bank of the Rhine. Maurice Barrès, the spirited champion of French rights on the Rhine, summed up the situation in terms full of hope and satisfaction:—

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> "The Separatist idea gains ground every day. A ferment, which originally came from the people, is now forcing distinguished personalities towards action along legal lines."

How grievously mistaken he was! Absolutely *nothing* "came from the people."

The population, it is true, could not help turning more and more towards the envied gold currencies of the Allied countries; and small wonder that the "Micum" (Mission Interalliée de Contrôle des Usines et des Mines), an institution specially set up for the circumstances by the French and Belgian Governments, was doing a flourishing business.

"Micum" contracts were made on a gold currency basis, which was against the laws in force in Germany proper. However, no blame attaches to the industrialists in the occupied territories making contracts with the "Micum" in gold currency, as, thanks to this firm basis, it was at last possible for mining and commercial agreements to be negotiated satisfactorily, and to the benefit of the severely tried working classes as well.

* * * * *

Political, as opposed to passive, resistance was firmly put down by the French and Belgian authorities. Out of thirty-two *Landräte* (District Administrators), twenty-six were deported to the far side of the Rhine. That the *Oberpräsident* of the Rhineland and the *Regierungspräsidenten* would have to quit, was a foregone conclusion.

The Separatists, on their part, under the benevolent eye of the two Continental Occupying Powers, established two trade-missions: the "Comité de la Rive Gauche du Rhin," which received its instructions from Paris, for the Southern Sector; and the "Comité Belgo-Rhénan," in Brussels, for the Northern Sector.

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Thus all the necessary foundations were laid for the complete autonomy of the Rhineland, under the ægis of the so-called "Rhenish Republican People's Party," which stood for independence with absolute sovereignty, freed from the hated Prussia.

* * * * *

It was in connection with this movement that I committed a piece of impudence that I should not have dreamt of in, say, 1914 or 1915:—I donned the uniform of captain in a certain British regiment of the Line! I shall never give away the secret of how, when and where I managed to slip into enemy uniform; but I will say this:—I did not dare show myself in this outfit to any British sentry, who might have challenged me to give the password.

But when Moroccan troops in Bonn, the first French "citadel" beyond the "English" Cologne, duly presented arms before "the British officer," my amusement and composure grew.

The Separatists on that day, late in July 1923, were holding a last meeting, for which their leaders had assembled, and where secession from Germany was to be proclaimed; the Western Powers being at the same time humbly asked to receive the Rhenish Republic into their "Comity of Nations."

This meeting we meant to supervise, in order to learn definitely who the wire-pullers were.

For me, the "British officer," to watch even the most unspectacular meeting, whose object was in any way connected with Separation, was all the more risky, as the Movement was rigorously "taboo" to the whole British Occupation Force, under express instructions from London.

Yet, it had to be done; and was done, to the astonishment of the stern-faced French.

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Had our Separatist friends scented the wolf that lurked under the British disguise, little would have been left of the uniform, let alone the wolf inside it.

I saw and heard all I wanted.

SIEGBURG SEPARATIST SESSION

—A Farce in One Act—

Scene.—*A cheap public-house on the outskirts of Siegburg, frequented by smugglers, Separatists and shady characters in general.*

A dirty dilapidated curtain hangs before the door, so that when guests enter they can be observed by the bar-tender and his assistants.

Enter the British Army Captain.

Commotion among the crowd. Anxious whispers: "What's that?" "Who's that?" Glances across tables and to groups of standing men. Those who have been preparing themselves for the meeting and who have been fortifying their courage with various drinks, are brought to "attention" by hearty blows dealt by the elbows of their friends.

With a respectful bow, the British captain is ushered to an upstairs room, his spurred boots causing the rickety staircase to creak even more than usual. Before the door of the room stands a "sentry," dressed in a combination uniform, which includes remnants of feldgrau and horizon bleu, with civilian shoes showing highly coloured socks.

The sentry shoulders his rifle, having vainly tried to present arms.

The door is opened. The delegate of the British Government finds himself before a huge table, around which sit a dozen or more "forbidden characters," who, however, are highly important personages in the inner council of the Separatist Movement. These persons were considered to be "les meilleurs combatants" by the sponsors of the Movement.

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Introductions. The British representative finds some difficulty in acquainting himself with the names of the members of the High Assembly. Whatever their names may be, among themselves they address each other as "Tünnes," "Hännes," "Schang" (for "Jean"), etc.

CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE

THE CHAIRMAN. *Medium-sized; reddish face; strong, imposing moustache; badly shaved, as no foreign plenipotentiary was expected; dressed in a frock-coat and black soft felt hat, which he never took off, as it was part of his general's uniform. That he wore this uniform was clearly indicated by his trousers, which formerly belonged to a general and which he had bought in a second-hand shop. If it had not been for the general's stripes he would have been the perfect "Hauptmann von Köpenick." He wears a tremendous écharpe, red-white-green, the colours of the Rhenish Republic.*

TÜNNES. *Second in command. Also wearing the insignia of the self-same Republic. Dressed like a gamekeeper of the German variety, with American army boots, presumably sold to him against the regulations of the American Army of Occupation. Healthy poacher type.*

REST OF THE ASSEMBLY *composed of gentlemen of the same stamp, each wearing either a dagger, an army sword, a revolver, or other implements of warfare and authority.*

BRITISH PLENIPOTENTIARY. *Dignified British army captain. Description of this type superfluous. Wears a monocle to increase his self-confidence.*

SPEECHES

THE CHAIRMAN (*saluting British Plenipotentiary*): "We've had enough of Prussian frightfulness! Down with German militarism! The Prussians have ruined our beautiful Rhineland! We must stamp out their ferocious methods in dealing with a peace-loving people—Yes! I am a pacifist! But a true pacifist must make war on those who are drunk with a lust for war and conquest. We

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Rhinelanders are a different race! French blood runs in our veins ever since Napoleon's army transformed our country into a Garden of Eden."

[*This thunderous rhetoric went on for a quarter of an hour. In the meantime drinks were freely served, while the atmosphere became more and more stifling because of the smell of alcohol and cheap French tobacco.*]

TÜNNES: "Hurrah! Hurrah!! Hurrah!!!"

RESOLUTIONS

THE CHAIRMAN: "My friends and followers! We have just heard the voice of the people! Let us not close our ears to the cries of our oppressed brothers. Let us submit to the High Allied Governments the unanimous wish of the Rhenish people that our beloved Rhineland be separated from the poisonous corpse of the German Reich, where already new imperialistic designs against the great French Republic are being hatched. What words could appeal to us more, to us, a truly civilized people, than the words Fraternité, Egalité, and—and—Humanité? [*The drinks had evidently made the chairman forget which was the third of the words inscribed on French banners.*] We submit to the representative of the English Government the resolution embodied in my speech, and we would ask him to forward this message from a people living in abject slavery, under the Prussian heel, to London, the capital of the great English Empire. In the meantime I am giving the following commands.

[*Upon this he drew from the pocket of his frockcoat a slightly stained and thumbed sheet of paper, from which he read out the instructions given by Herr Doktor Dorten for the Southern Sector, and Herr Smeets for the Northern Sector of the future Rhenish Republic. Tünnes was appointed Chief of General Staff for the Forces which were to concentrate upon the* Siebengebirge, *with full powers for requisitioning whatever these Forces might require.*]

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THE CHAIRMAN (*continuing*): "Herr königlicher Hauptmann! [*This to the British Plenipotentiary.*] Would it not be possible for you to give some encouraging assurances that the English will stand by the Rhenish Republic in her hour of dire need, something which we could give our brave army as a battle-cry against our tyrants? Our noble soldiers would be heartened by an inspiring message from the one nation which has at all times stood out against tyranny and enslavement of the weak.

THE BRITISH PLENIPOTENTIARY (*trying his best to make himself understood in his broken German*): "Ah—ah—His Majesty's Government, I am afraid to say, do not see their way to support or promote any endeavour to split off, as embodied in this Session's resolution, any part, and in particular the occupied Rhenish area, from Germany as a whole."

[*Uproar. Angry surprise. Bewilderment. . . .*

The British Plenipotentiary rises from his chair. In spite of his discouraging statement, deep bows on all sides. With a half-hearted and embarrassed politeness, the British Plenipotentiary is ushered out of the room and down the staircase.

Heaving a sigh of relief, and breathing at last once more fresh air, he steps into his waiting car and makes for the direction of Bonn.]

CURTAIN.

I made my escape via Siegburg by car; and in that car the German civilian reappeared, in spite of the July sun which blazed on and on, evidently doing all in its power to show me up.

What a sigh of relief when I stopped in front of the Dom-Hotel in Cologne, and reported to Herr Doktor Bracht, the Reich's emissary from Berlin, on the performance of the Grand Separatist Circus in Siegburg! He was a man of energy and character; but his hair had almost

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turned grey, such was his anxiety over this stunt of mine; he had feared I might never come back alive.

Now we knew exactly where we stood. For the "strategical" plans of the Separatists had been openly outlined at that meeting; and if there were any missing links in our information, they were supplied to us by extensive reports in the *Revue Rhénane*, the organ of Separatism; another paper, the *Echo du Rhin*, put the finishing touches to this pretty picture.

* * * * *

Thanks to the "Passive Resistance," the traffic on the intricate network of the Rhenish railways was brought to an absolute standstill. It was not only impossible, but against the unwritten orders issued by invisible powers, for the German inhabitants to travel on the substitute railway organisation set up by the French and Belgians, called the *Régie*.

The *Régie*! What a hopelessly disorganised affair it became! Congestion on the left bank of the Rhine, then a sudden breakdown and collapse on the right bank, and vice versa. And all the time the "invisible power" was doing its utmost to "improve" on the situation.

Both along the Rhine and the Moselle, as many of my readers will know, the line passes through one tunnel after another; and strange to relate, as often as not, when a *Régie* train, and in particular a troop train, had entered one of these endless tunnels, the "block system" would go wrong, and the train would find itself brought to a stop in subterranean smoke and darkness, with the signal obstinately and unflinchingly set against it.

Another Rintelen, my brother, was then Reichsbahn-Direktor in Trier; and presumably not without reason, the French suspected him strongly of being connected with these ever-recurring mishaps that befell the "block system,"

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which had worked so reliably, until the Passive Resistance had begun.

So another Rintelen was sent to gaol.

Bonn became his temporary residence; and what a *Wiedersehen* when, once a month, I was permitted to visit him. One day, however, an *ordonnance* was posted up, to the effect that bail was to be granted to certain detained prisoners, the sum to be deposited to be fixed in accordance with the charge made against them, and the punishment their conviction would entail; for gradually the prisons had become overcrowded, and prisoners unmanageable.

A small number of shares of some Rhenish mining company were soon procured, whose market value represented an astonishingly high figure in the eyes of the French officer appointed to deal with these cases.

The Frenchman gladly signed a receipt for such an unheard-of sum—we were now in August 1923, when the dollar was quoted at 10,000,000 marks—and my brother walked out, to disappear the same night into the enveloping darkness of the unoccupied territory.

With all posthumous respect to the French Command, I may add that the shares given in pawn for my brother were not accompanied by their dividend-coupon sheets. The day after, I proceeded to the head office of the mining company concerned, handed over, with an explanation that met with an understanding smile, the coupon-sheets so faithlessly withheld, and the shares were, under German law, declared null and void.

Lest there be any doubt in my readers' minds, I wish to point out that the fraud did not consist of any monetary swindle; the military authorities were only cheated out of my brother.

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The economic conditions throughout the Occupied Area had by now become almost untenable owing to the rocket-like appreciation of the gold currencies as against the paper-mark.

The flight of the mark followed the trend of military and, later on, of political developments, as the following figures show.

The dollar was worth:—

In 1914 (prior to the outbreak of the War)	4 marks 20 pf.
From January 1915 to July 1918 . .	5.50 M.
In November 1918 (the date of the Armistice)	7.50 M.
June 1919 (Versailles) . . .	15.00 M.
March 1921 (occupation of Duisburg and Düsseldorf)	75.00 M.
February 1922 (when payment in approved currencies of 31 million gold-marks, every ten days, was imposed) .	about 200 M.
July 1922 (after Rathenau's murder) .	about 400 M.
October 1922 (when a series of "productive guarantees" were demanded by the Allies)	2,000 M.
November 1922 (when my salary was paid)	7,500 M.

I was indeed fortunate to be paid so soon, for see what happened less than four months later:

February 1923 (Ruhr Invasion) . .	42,000 M.
July 1923 (when a continuous Customs cordon was drawn between occupied and unoccupied territory) . .	150,000 M.
August 1, 1923 (Separation in sight) .	1,000,000 M.
August 31, 1923 (when the Palatinate's autonomy was recognised by the Rhineland Commission) . . .	10,000,000 M.

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From that time on the mark fell at an ever-increasing rate, until finally it ceased to have any real value for more than a moment of time:

September 5, 1923 . . .	20,000,000 M
„ 10 . . .	50,000,000 M.
„ 18 . . .	150,000,000 M.
October 1 . . .	240,000,000 M.
„ 9 . . .	1,200,000,000 M.
„ 12 . . .	4,000,000,000 M.
„ 19 . . .	12,000,000,000 M.
„ 22 . . .	40,000,000,000 M.
November 1 . . .	130,000,000,000 M.
„ 3 . . .	420,000,000,000 M.
„ 13 . . .	840,000,000,000 M.
„ 14 . . .	1,200,000,000,000 M.
„ 20 . . .	4,200,000,000,000 M.

* * * * *

Members of the Army of Occupation will recollect how, during this crisis, one had to go out before breakfast to buy a loaf of bread, because by tea-time the same sum would hardly suffice for the purchase of a roll.

Small wonder that under this overwhelming economic pressure those classes of the population, who were least inclined to believe in Separatism and the proclamation of an Independent State, gradually developed into Separatists —with a difference: *Edel-Separatisten*, they called themselves.

How could a father of a family be expected to look into an abyss, instead of into a future? Great strength of character was required not to fall a victim to the allurements of those gold currencies which scarcely underwent any fluctuation throughout that period.

The result was that the commercial community—the

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manufacturing establishments as well as the trading classes —came to the conclusion that the *Berliner Mark*, as it was derisively called by those who openly sympathised with Separatism, should be replaced by some definite value, the more so as all that was left of municipal authorities—the few *Oberbürgermeister*—jointly, if vainly, asked that the Central Government in Berlin should come to a decision over the question of a currency to be established on a definite basis.

While these negotiations were still in progress, the Western Powers took the first step, by introducing, on September 25, what was called the *Régie-Franc*, and these tokens bore, characteristically enough, on their front an effigy of Father Rhine.

That was the beginning of the end.

Unless Berlin could pull itself together, the establishment of a Rhenish-Westphalian Gold Discount Bank, to function on terms of equality with the Reichsbank on the one hand, and the Banque de France and the Banque de Belgique on the other, was inevitable. As a preparatory step to the creation of the new Western state, destined to be powerless in spite of the twelve, if not fifteen, million souls who would be called its citizens—the *Génie du Rhin* was set up, something equivalent to a Board of Trade and of Engineering in England.

Yet, contrary to all the expectations of the French and of the Belgian *Comités de la Politique*, working from the outside, and a group of Cologne banking firms, such as the Hagens and the Schröders, working from within, the Rhineland was spared the sadness of seeing the plan of the Gold Discount Bank take definite shape, sound though it appeared on purely economic grounds.

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Politically, a beginning was made on October 24, 1923, when the French General de Metz took the step of recognising the Palatinate as an autonomous state with a provisional government. At about the same time, the Reich Chancellor and candidate for the Reich Presidency, Dr. Marx, explicitly stated his approval of the creation of a Rhenish-Westphalian political unit.

The Reich Government's proposal, however, was in sharp opposition to that of the French and the Belgians; for while the latter saw in the new republic an independent buffer state, the former insisted on considering it as a federal unit within the Reich.

No other project saw light; for the French abandoned theirs, when the British Government proposed referring the whole question to the International Court at The Hague; while the man in the street showed his disapproval of Dr. Marx's plan by not electing him, two years later, to the Reich Presidency.

Meanwhile, irrespective of what Berlin had already agreed to, amid the general chaos, Passive Resistance increased until it reached its climax.

* * * * *

Separatism reached its climax too.

I shall never forget the " Bloody Sunday "—September 30, 1923—in Düsseldorf. A whole army of 20,000 Separatists, fully equipped, and carrying their green, white and red tricolor—on either side of it a Moroccan tirailleur—made its entry into the town, to take possession of the northern " Sector," as it was called, of the new State.

There was no ovation. The German police were on duty, as usual, though unarmed at the special instructions of the French Commander-in-Chief. The Separatists were about to hoist their flag on the *Rathaus*, when all of a sudden

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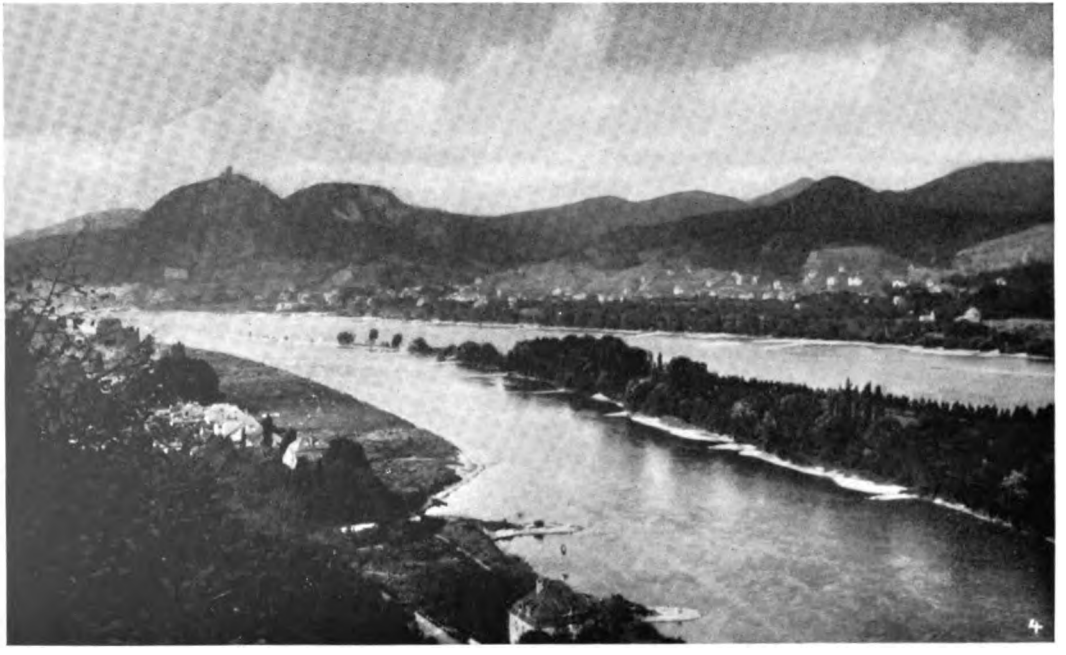

SIEBENGEBIRGE

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armed civilians, loyal inhabitants of Düsseldorf and the surrounding towns, made their appearance from right and left.

Shooting broke out from all directions. The loyalists fought with the enthusiasm of despair—and the "army" of 20,000 Separatists were forced to retreat.

The only victims of the affray were a few officers of the Düsseldorf police. They had been literally torn to pieces by the mob which a few minutes before had called itself The Separatist Regular Army!

The gainers were the *Régie-Bahn*, which was highly paid, from a discreet source, for the transport of 20,000 in one direction, and 20,000 in the opposite direction. Further, the instigators had so misjudged the political temper in Rhine and Ruhr, that they had overlooked the reductions offered by "cheap one-day returns. . . ."

The Separatist Armies which invaded Coblenz, Trier, and Düren met with a similar discomfiture.

* * * * *

The political struggle over the "Free State" was not to end yet; after the failure of military measures, economic pressure was tried once more.

This time, flying detachments of Separatists invaded the smaller towns and villages, to sequester the local treasuries and seize the food supplies, and even cattle. About the middle of November they converged "according to plan" towards the wooded mountains near Bonn, the *Siebengebirge*.

Telephone communications had been interrupted by the Separatist organisers; but by mysterious, and often round-about ways, a relay service was maintained all along the Rhine, with branch lines reaching into the surrounding countryside.

The ensuing "Battle" of the Ægidien-Berg, near Honnef,

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on November 15, 1923, proved the last occasion when the Separatist "Armies" felt like shedding their blood for their Phantom Fatherland—at least as far as the few genuine volunteers were concerned. The rest, consisting of God knows what, carried on their old game of brigandage—as before.

* * * * *

Passive Resistance had by now become untenable—no matter how gallant the struggle put up by the individual small man—in all great struggles the backbone of a protracted resistance.

Two grave decisions were, by a grotesque coincidence, taken on one and the same date. On November 23 the Reich Government in Berlin declared itself favourable to the installation of a *Direktorium* for an autonomous Rhineland.

On the same November 23, the *Chambre des Députés* in Paris whole-heartedly endorsed the declaration of Raymond Poincaré, the new Premier, that the policy of the French Republic required the recognition of the new State.

* * * * *

Meanwhile, in Berlin, the initial step towards stabilising the currency had been taken: on November 20, by a clever move, the dollar was "caught" at a level of 4,200,000,000,000 paper-marks; exactly 10 "noughts" were struck off by governmental decree, and the pre-war parity of 4.20 gold-marks to the American dollar was restored. The new currency, the *Renten-Mark*, based on the income from the country's general production, was put into circulation the same day, and as a corollary, the Berlin Government at once opened a credit of several hundred million of these Renten-Marks for the benefit of the Rhineland.

But Renten-Mark or no Renten-Mark, the Inter-Allied

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High Commission brusquely forbade the admission of the new currency into the territory under its authority. The Commission preferred to see the way paved for its favourite child, *die Rheinisch-Westfälische-Gold-Diskont-Bank*, with Head Office in Cologne.

The High Commissioners' decision was prompted by the desire to create interdependence, for Reparations purposes, between the production of the whole of the Rhenish-Westphalian mining and manufacturing industries, and a financial system based on an autonomous currency, which would be indirectly tied to the French and Belgian Central Banks' control.

On November 24 it seemed that the Rhineland's fate was sealed.

The Separatists, of whom there was still a good number in high quarters, met the French and Belgian High Commissioners, who now called them "Legitimists," and affected to consider them the only genuine representatives of the Rhine and the Ruhr.

The subject of the discussion was:—

"*Principes sur lesquels pourrait être basée la constitution d'un Etat Rhénan*"—(Principles on which might be based the Constitution of a Rhineland State).

At this meeting the two parties reached an agreement, which was fully endorsed by the industrial magnates as well as by the leading figures in the political life of the Rhineland, to the consternation of all those, like myself, who had done their best to maintain the integrity of a united Reich. There was nothing left for us now but to resign ourselves to the inevitable.

All of us who had been fighting from behind the scenes and in the open against any idea, against any plan whose execution would mean Separatism of one kind or another,

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felt that we had been badly "let down" by the Central Government in Berlin.

Our sole consolation lay in this, that there was nothing absolutely definite and final in this Separation which those weak-kneed gentlemen at their meetings—held partly in the Wilhelmstrasse, and partly at Monsieur Paul Tirard's, the chairman of the Rhineland High Commission, headquarters in Coblenz—had decided upon. We firmly believed that the day would come when this half-way concession would or could be revoked.

* * * * *

One of the leading personalities in those negotiations gave us to understand that there was one extenuating circumstance to be found in favour of those in power in Berlin.

Bavaria had been the first Federal State to find its feet, and consolidate what had been left unharmed by the revolutions and counter-revolutions, from Kurt Eisner's presidency and his Soviet régime, to Hitler's ill-starred 'Bürger-Bräu'-Putsch. It was greatly to be feared that this corner-stone of Nationalist Germany might break away, and that the secession would be difficult to combat if the Berlin Government were distracted by the task of having to deal with the Rhineland at one and the same time.

Authority in Berlin did not want "two revolutions" on its hands.

Bavaria, once it had broken away, would be the more difficult to win back in the future, whereas the Rhineland, easier to win back, was the more difficult to deal with at the present, occupied as it was by foreign and hostile troops.

The Central Reich Government were not, at *that* time, particularly afraid of the consequences of the abortive Hitler-Putsch; what alarmed them was that the General

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commanding the Bavarian section of the Reichswehr, General von Lossow, had openly joined hands with the other Putsch leaders.

From Noske to Blomberg, through Gessler and Seeckt, through Gröner and Schleicher—the bulwark of the Reich's unity has been and remains the Reichswehr, around which all the other forces striving for the same end must crystallise.

Once Bavaria had given the lead, the break-up of the Reich would be but a matter of time; already the intransigent, if not defiant, attitude of the Radical Socialist-cum-Communist Government in Dresden had actually necessitated an " invasion " of Saxony by Reichswehr forces and the deposition of that Government, with the subsequent declaration of martial law!

What had proved a delicate task for the Reichswehr, a kind of trial of its power, in the case of Socialist Saxony, might prove so difficult, in the case of Nationalist Bavaria, with its unconcealed Monarchist leanings, as to overstrain the Reichswehr's reliability. There, the House of Wittelsbach was as popular as ever before, and up and down the country there was nothing but praise for the dignified attitude of Crown Prince Rupprecht, whose personality alone might well be a rallying point for many Germans, even beyond the white and blue frontier-posts of Bavaria.

The secession of Bavaria might lead to the complete disruption of the Reich. So I urged on my friends in Cologne, on purely historical grounds, that it was maintaining the Reich's unity, if for the time being we had to put up with the more or less definite creation of the Rhineland as a buffer state; our instincts told us it would be temporary!

However, we were justified in holding that a Rhineland, established as a buffer state, though destined only to a short

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life, was nevertheless certain, while it lived, to be a source of unending friction between Germany and her two neighbours, Belgium and France.

* * * * *

The Foreign Minister of Germany, Dr. Stresemann, just appointed to bring order in the chaos that prevailed in the Wilhelmstrasse in those days, clearly recognised to what an extent the situation was fraught with danger. The possibility of Bavaria and Austria joining hands was openly spoken of, and such a disruption of the Reich would have terrible consequences for Central Europe.

Dr. Adenauer, the Oberbürgermeister of Cologne, as the chief negotiator on the side of the Rhinelanders in their deliberations with the representatives of the Western Powers, had acted on the strength of what were understood to be the final instructions from Berlin. Without disavowing him, Dr. Stresemann nevertheless initiated diplomatic conversations with the French and Belgian Governments, a task in which he was ably assisted by Lord d'Abernon, the British Ambassador in Berlin.

Both Lord d'Abernon and his superior, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, as he then was, had realised the complications which would unavoidably follow upon the creation of an autonomous Rhineland, as a buffer state between the three contracting parties. They foresaw the threat of war which would inevitably entangle Great Britain a second time.

The Treaty of Locarno, which was not finally negotiated until nearly a year later, was the outcome of laborious *pourparlers* begun at this time; it marked the first milestone on the road to political appeasement on the Continent, while the Reichstag's final approval of the Dawes Plan for future Reparations payments marked the first milestone economically.

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At last it had been found that a burden voluntarily accepted by Germany, was to prove more profitable to the Allies than one imposed on a vanquished enemy.

So the Rhineland Autonomous State was buried for good and all, and the equilibrium of Europe was saved.

As a gesture intended both to symbolise the preservation of Germany's unity throughout all this struggle, and to signalise the fact that the negotiations conducted by Dr. Adenauer had had as their object the attainment of a provisional solution of a grave problem, and had been not contrary to, but actually in the interests of, the Reich, he was appointed President of the *Preussische Staatsrat*, a "Council of Elder Statesmen," then a most important political body.

* * * * *

A united Germany, set on its feet once more thanks to the stabilisation of the currency, seemed gradually to be returning to fairly normal conditions.

The famous decision of the Supreme Court in Leipzig: *Mark gleich Mark*, which had led to such sad consequences during the inflation period, seemed now to have found a real justification:—The new currency, the gold-mark, had been established on exactly the same parity as the old pre-war mark—about 20 mark 40 pfennig to the gold pound sterling.

But alas! this transformation had reduced to a pile of *débris* capital values of all descriptions. Fortunes had vanished into thin air, and it was months before the average man could take stock of what the remorseless process of the inflation had left him.

All had not been settled by the simple fact that the Reich Government and the Reichsbank had decreed that the currency was on a gold basis once more; a man had to

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trace back to pre-war times—via inflation—to find out what fortune he now actually possessed; what values were represented by his house, his furniture, his jewels, his clothes, and last, but not least, the securities he owned.

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Personally, I had kept fairly clear of the abyss.

My pride had made me eager to own what in America would be called the " swellest " motor-car in all Cologne.

The car had, down to the smallest accessory, to be made to order, and I wanted it as modern and up-to-date as possible. So I had it constructed under my own supervision, right up to the day of delivery. The factory, originally a small coach-maker's workshop, was within easy reach of the house where I had my flat. Every morning during the inflation I called in at my coach-maker's to inquire how big a basket-full of paper-marks—really decorative the banknotes were in those days, with all their noughts strung on end like beads—he required for the day's work, payment of wages, and purchases of raw materials.

The basket, by the way, had to be larger from day to day, until finally it became a question of *how many baskets.*

After a few months of these regular visits to the coach-maker's, I was certain to be called a megalomaniac, every time I revealed to my friends the " fortune " I had had to invest in my " swell " automobile.

The fact that I had " stayed " most of the War, and several years afterwards, in enemy country, had given me clear insight into what the economic policy of Germany's former enemies necessarily was to be.

Wholly detached as I had become from the German atmosphere during those War years, it was not to be wondered at that I saw things more clearly than ninety-nine

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out of a hundred of my compatriots. My political instinct told me what was coming, and I kept steady, while the turmoil increased almost from day to day, until the catastrophe was there, to the detriment of friend and foe alike.

I dutifully passed on to my office each day the instruction to work out, and jot down, how many dollars, or fractions of dollars, the basket of paper-marks in net profits had amounted to.

How many paper-marks that car had cost me, I shall never know, for there were too many noughts to count up, and the figures were so fantastic as to be meaningless. But when one morning a magnificent car, with its six-cylinder engine, which was, in 1923, the pinnacle of motor-design, the *dernier cri* in technique, stood in all its glory before my door, I had only to look at the right-hand column of my account book, and do a simple addition sum, to find, after some thirty seconds, that my beautiful new toy had cost me—just 240 dollars!

Two hundred and forty dollars for the envy of any motor-car owner!

My luck as a proud motorist was, sad to say, not of long duration. On the maiden trip from Cologne to Bonn, I "succeeded" in scratching a French military car; the furious officer at once lodged a strongly worded complaint with the British High Command in Cologne against the Boche who had dared to deface his Citroën; a summons was served on me by a red-capped M.P., and a few days later my licence was taken away from me for the duration of the British Occupation. Allies are allies, after all!

The shrewd economist who had invested only 240 dollars in a first-class car now found himself obliged to get rid of it for what it would fetch. Objects with an intrinsic value had, as a consequence of the process of returning to a gold

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standard, appreciated fantastically—so fantastically that my car, though my heart bled at parting with her, so beautiful was she, fetched 8,000 gold-marks, equivalent to nearly 2000 dollars.

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Not everyone was as fortunate as myself, and there were many Germans who lost large sums of money through not realising in time where the inflation movement was bound to lead.

For instance, an acquaintance of mine possessed a beautiful estate in the Bavarian mountains, and one day, at the height of the inflation, he and his wife decided that from the balcony of their bedroom they would like to have a clear and uninterrupted view of the Zugspitze.

This meant that an avenue would have to be cut through a stretch of magnificent old fir-trees. A neighbouring peasant was given instructions to attend to the cutting and sawing up of the trees into logs, and to get them carried on drays to a local saw-mill, whose owner entered into a contract with my friend to pay cash on delivery for the goods,—paper-marks, of course. The amount was fixed in advance.

Rain and snow followed upon one another in rapid succession, as it was spring-time; besides, my friend was often absent, and unable to supervise effectively. The result was that the work was not carried out as stipulated.

Several weeks went by; no one was properly alive to the ever-growing depreciation from day to day. At last, the "goods were delivered," and the saw-mill owner, true to his word, paid the sum agreed upon.

During these weeks of delay, for which no one was maliciously responsible, the depreciation of the paper-mark,

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as against the dollar, had been such that my friend who had had to pay excise duty on the equivalent of originally 1200 dollars, received in the end, after still more days had been lost over the necessary banking transactions to, in and from Munich, about 80 dollars. But the saw-mill owner was in legitimate possession of goods of real worth.

This case shows how dearly a man had to pay for not keeping a watchful eye on the foreign exchange during those days—even though he was not professionally interested in currency transactions.

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Officially, stabilisation had been carried through; but a great many people within the country doubted whether this rapid change, done almost over-night, in the foundations of the economic life would be of lasting nature. The consequence was that most Germans, scared by the experience of the past five years, were afraid of investing money, let alone granting advances. They preferred to entrust their new gold-marks to the German banks. These, realising that money would become an increasingly valuable possession, were willing to pay enormous rates of interest, so as to be in a position later on to meet the demands of trade, commerce and industry, once confidence in the new currency had taken firmer root.

Money invested on long term with the banks now brought an unbelievably high return; quite frequently banks offered anything between 24 per cent. and 36 per cent. per annum, while in cases where a bank's client fell into arrears in paying back an overdraft, the interest charged by the bank was twice as high.

I remember hearing of a firm in the Rhineland, which in February 1924, shortly after the stabilisation, became

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involved in a legal dispute with another over the delivery of certain goods, and was sued before a court. The matter was a purely commercial issue, and both parties were to some extent within their rights.

The legal procedure, with all its paraphernalia, took several months, and it was not until June of the same year, four months later, that the court reached a decision. By that time the uncertainty as to what outcome the financial measures of the Government would have, whether, in fact, the stabilisation would prove lasting, had caused a further degree of uneasiness, and the rates of interest had gone up still more. The rise had been such that the firm sued, which had lost the case, was ordered by the court to pay, in addition to the principal, interest at the rate of 72 per cent. per annum!

The opportunities which such a situation presented were soon enough recognised by foreign banking firms, with the result that by mid-summer 1924 the country was swarming with foreign, and in particular American, financial representatives.

These gentlemen set to work to convince German banks, factories, mining and transport companies, churches and convents, municipalities and state treasuries, that, by accepting instantly the proffered gold currency, either as short-term credits, or, what the agents preferred, as long-term loans, these various corporations were conferring upon themselves blessings to which none other could be reverently compared.

Transactions, bordering on the scandalous, and involving scores of millions, became objects of discussions in city, county and state councils, almost as frequently as at company board meetings.

Tips and bribes in every form were freely distributed,

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so that the American dollars in particular could be invested at the enormous rates then prevailing in Germany, which were treated by both sides as a phenomenon that would last for ever.

Eminent lawyers, such as Dr. Albert, who knew the working of the American mind fairly well, would gladly attest that the city of Dortmund, for instance, or the North German Lloyd, was good for a handful of million dollars, and the deal was thereupon closed.

Interest plus commission alone became heavy burdens for those who had permitted themselves to receive these blessings, which, in the long run, proved of rather doubtful value.

There was a mad scramble on both sides to give and to take. Where the money should come from to repay all these loans was left to the gods to work out, and whenever doubts as to where this whole business would lead to were expressed, the irresponsible reply invariably was: "Let us leave that for future generations to take care of."

The flood of money which was poured into Germany was such that the Reich Government found itself in possession of huge credits that it did not know what to do with. Part went in lavish, even reckless, expenditure on public works, and in other payments of a less creditable nature. But still vast sums remained.

It has since been revealed, in the course of discussions in the Reichstag, that, in order to make the budget balance, the Treasury was forced to conceal certain moneys at its disposal, and not let them appear in the accounts.

One paradoxical consequence was that the Reich Government was accused at one and the same time of undue *Thesaurierungs-Politik*, a policy of excessive saving, and of squandering improvidently public money.

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The " poor " magnates of the Rhine and the Ruhr, who were now bitterly complaining that owing to the stabilisation they had become unable to carry out those " Micum " contracts of a year ago, which, it will be recalled, had been the culmination of the autonomy intrigues, were unhesitatingly presented with a lump sum of 600 million gold-marks by the Reich Government, on the understanding that no account need be rendered of how this enormous sum was employed.

Whenever Socialists, Communists, or even any one of the then six Members of the Reichstag who belonged to the still enigmatic *National-Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei*, dared to raise a question on this delicate affair, they were invariably muzzled by a vote of closure, no matter how loudly they shouted " Corruption ! "

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Before I go on, I must digress a little.

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CHAPTER VII

WINTER sports were going to be the order of the day. The Bavarian Alps, with all the splendour and the glittering glory that snow, ice, and frost shed upon Nature, enticed me to outstay my Christmas holidays by a few days.

On the Eibsee, just below the Zugspitze, the Canadians had beaten the Munich ice-hockey team; and the magnificent thrill this spectacle provided, made me decide that the prospect of another match, this time in the sombre and stately setting of the Königsee, was worth the tramp in the wake of those splendid men from Munich.

Brilliant sunshine and the bluest of skies welcomed us on our arrival, though it was bitterly cold.

All the forenoon, all the afternoon, with a brief interruption for a nice hot collation, we stood and watched the tremendous fight, with the two teams racing up and down the ice-sheeted arena which Nature had provided for this terrifically fast game.

A spectacle of wondrous beauty in surroundings of equal beauty.

Yet, the thrill had not proved sufficient to keep the breathless spectators' feet warm. After the last whistle had sounded, a stroll, a trot around the lake, and up the narrow path that leads into the blackness of the mountain-pines, was acclaimed the best *riposte* to an alpine winter's inclemency.

A bottle of fine old brandy was our *guter Kamerad*: a Frenchman, straight from his native town Cognac.

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With the rapidity which is so peculiar to these high regions, dusk followed upon day, and darkness upon dusk.

We were now homeward bound, and in the far distance the tiny windows of the fisher folks' huts, one after another, sent out specks of light, showing us where the village of Königsee lay.

Soon we should reach the cosy warmth of the hut which was to give us shelter for the evening.

Der gute Kamerad had spoken perhaps too invitingly to my fair companion and me—at any rate, to me—for, as I took my eyes off the narrow path to stare for a mere second up to where I thought I had seen a chamois crossing the whiteness of a snowfield—a slip, and the ten metres of rock down to the ice-covered lake flashed past my eyes. . . .

All round the edge of the Königsee there are warm springs, so that the ice-field itself forms a floating island, the layer of ice growing thicker as you leave the rim behind.

Under the water, instantly and intuitively I knew that the worst was still to come; owing to the angle of my fall I would rise some feet further from the rim, to find myself imprisoned beneath a sheet of ice.

The sheet *must* be broken!

With the will-power that only the acutest danger can summon, I stiffened my neck and my shoulders, while I still struggled up through the icy water. It was to be a test which was the stronger: the ice, or my skull.

The skull won.

The spring-like action of the taut muscles splintered the crust that threatened to hold me under.

My companion had scarcely realised that I had disappeared, walking as she had been a few steps in front of me. Before she even knew what had occurred, my head popped through the crack it had burst open.

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KÖNIGSEE

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I smiled at her—half from my own astonishment, half in order to reassure her that I was safe and sound.

Safe and sound?

Where to land, where to reach dry ground, when there was nothing but a barren and sheer wall of rock wherever my searching eyes turned?

A few splashes, so as to get near what seemed to be firm and hard. My hands groped over the frozen face of the giant of alpine rock, reaching out for a crevice or a ledge where they might cling.

My efforts were in vain! No crevice, no ledge anywhere.

I splashed on—trying once more, a few yards further along.

At last! A tiny sapling, a Christmas tree! A mere nothing it seemed. And yet this wee bit of a Christmas tree was to save my life. . . .

Forty minutes on end I clung with one hand to my frail yet staunch Christmas tree.

It *was* just Christmas time!

I was now hanging in the icy water up to my waist.

Above me, bare rock seemed to reach into the sky, as if those clouds were just above its edge.

The last shadows were about to fall; it was just that dim, colourless interval between the gloaming and utter darkness; the clouds were being chased into the night by the strong, grim wind.

Every second that passed, as the daylight slipped silently away, seemed longer.

By now I was quite alone.

My companion had grasped the situation—and acted with that clear-sighted impetus, that quick vision, which only the sense of imminent mortal danger can give you, as

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when you suddenly jump a high railing to grab at a child that is slipping into the water.

A very steep path, where an inch to the left or to the right might have meant the same danger to her as it had meant to myself. . . . Snow, which had been thawing in the afternoon, and had begun to freeze again immediately the sun went down, snow which could neither bear you nor allow you to slide. . . . Sinister rocks on one side, on the other sinister forests. . . . And over all, the dusk deepening into black night.

Far in the distance she made out the silhouettes of human beings—fishermen, men who knew the dangers, the snares of the tricky lake. It was only a few hundred yards; but they seemed miles to the fearful eyes of one who was dead beat, half from anxiety, half from the exhaustion of running.

* * * * *

My cries for help were echoing across the lake, so that it was impossible to make out where those calls came from.

Dimmer and dimmer they grew. . . .

By now the lake was smothered in darkness.

A small row-boat was pushed into the water, as fast as snow and ice would permit. But where to row for?

Along the rim of the lake, where the ice was thinnest, they rowed, guided by some kind of sixth sense which is vouchsafed only to those who are born and live among those mountains.

As for me, minutes, hours, days, months, years seemed to pass, as I grew numbed into timelessness.

The more the physical strength, the power to hold out, seemed to fade away, the more the will to live seemed to fill my brain like the clang of a bell.

The first few stars appeared on the dark blue dome above me, as if lit like candles.

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"Candles . . . Christmas candles? . . ."

Gradually mind and subconsciousness merged. . . . "Candles, it seems high time to light candles. . . . Where is Marie-Luise? Why is she not by her father when there are candles round his bier? Why is no one else here?"

I still thought I was thinking—but it was all phantasy, by now. . . .

"No, there must be no phantasies; I want to live, I must live, I'm not going to drown here like a cat, I'm not going to let go . . . those aren't candles; they're stars."

Once more an effort; my whole body stiffened into a last iron determination:

"I will live. It must be . . . It can't be that I should die like this. . . ."

Yet my arms are saying "no" . . . they refuse to hold out: I felt my fingers loosen . . . the tiny Christmas tree began to slip through.

I dropped. A cry reached my ears at this moment:

"*Nicht auslassen!*" ("Don't let go!")

As the water slid up my body, I heard more human voices. . . .

A face above me. . . . I must have been pulled out of the icy water. . . .

A rough fisherman working my arms up and down:

"Keep it up! You must! You'll pull through if you do; but you must."

Too much. . . . I slipped out of consciousness once more.

* * * * *

An hour later I found myself under a mountain of blankets; a dozen rough hands remorselessly rubbing my arms and my chest. . . .

"Where am I? . . . What's all this? . . . What's happened?"

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"Keep quiet: don't speak now."

Remorselessly the rubbing went on over my chest, all over my body, my legs. . . . "What is all this about?"

"Keep quiet; you must keep quiet!"

Another relapse: "You're hurting me."

This fierce rubbing gave me pains all over: "Must you rub me?"

A soft, motherly hand lifted my head: something hot, something burning, was running down my throat. It was a few drops of *Der gute Kamerad.* He not only revived me: he saved me from pneumonia, rheumatism, bronchitis and what not else.

"What is all this? What are you doing? . . . I know you" . . . I whispered.

"Yes, you know me."

In the half-dark room I recognised a face . . . that face *was* familiar to me. . . .

"Don't you remember? I was with you this evening . . . when you slipped."

"I can't remember: that must be a long time ago."

"It was about an hour and a half ago."

"How's that? I don't remember all this."

"Never mind; have a good sleep now; to-morrow we'll tell you all about it. Good-night."

"Good-night."

* * * * *

Twenty-four hours later, I was waltzing at the 'Odeon's Casino' in Munich.

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CHAPTER VIII

1926

NOT long before this, normal relations between Germany and the United States of America had been resumed; a re-establishment that had been unhappily delayed pending the American Congress' discussion of the Peace Treaty.

Ambassadors were once more exchanged, and Consulates were set up in all the large American towns, and, correspondingly, in Germany.

One of the consequences of this re-establishment of normal relations, the one that has most bearing on this story, was that the Government of the United States, checking over its inventory of war losses, put forward a claim for damages arising out of acts of sabotage, alleged to have been committed on its territory during the neutrality period from 1914 to 1917. The United States demanded a sum of no less than thirty million dollars.

It was agreed between the two Governments that there should be a special court of arbitration to decide the issues, that proceedings before it should be conducted in a free and spontaneous manner, and that either of the two contracting parties should indisputably have the right of stating its own case unreservedly, whatever it might be, just as if there had never been a war.

The "Mixed Claims Commission" was set up, and consisted of one American and one German judge, who, on their part, had to agree upon an umpire as their chairman. For

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once, Berlin rose to the occasion—it was at the time of Dr. Stresemann's tenure of office—and selected a national of the United States for this highly important position.

And one of the first paragraphs in the preamble to the agreement between the two countries about the Mixed Claims Commission held that:

> "both parties hereby agree that they are in honour bound to produce all and every evidence which might have a bearing on the cases at issue, even if such evidence should appear, or be found to be, prejudicial to their cause."

In honour bound!

In honour bound!!

* * * * *

But after that one good gesture, Berlin erred. Men were appointed to handle the case for Germany, as far as the collection and submission of evidence were concerned, whose sneering attitude of indifference to Germany's historic past, and to other nations' susceptibilities, had impressed me so painfully on my first visit to Berlin after my return from America. I was filled with forebodings of evil when I first learned, towards the end of 1925, to whose hands these grave issues had been entrusted. It was not long before these forebodings were proved true; but what came to pass was far more disquieting than my worst imaginings could foresee.

In February, a letter from the Auswärtige Amt in Berlin asked me, in the politest language, to come to Berlin for a discussion.

I had to defer my visit to them, for I was now beginning to suffer a little from the consequences of the Königsee adventure; but upon receipt of an urgent wire, I decided to

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go, all the same. This was the first move in a game the end of which is not yet in sight; not yet—in 1935.

The letter I had received ran as follows:

Berlin, 23rd February, 1926.

Auswärtiges Amt.
III B 190.

Very urgent!

TheAmerican Government has brought actions against the German Reich before the German-American Mixed Claims Commission in Washington, in which damages amounting to about 30 million dollars will be claimed for the destruction of the Black Tom Head Station in New Jersey (on 30.7.1916) and of the Kingsland Plant (on 11.1.1917) alleged to have been caused through German agents.

The American Government is unable, however, to bring forward direct evidence in the matter, such as would prove that the destruction of precisely these buildings was brought about by definite agents obeying orders from the German Government. It attempts therefore to attain its object with so-called "prima facie" evidence, by submitting that the German military authorities did in fact give orders for the destruction of American property on American territory during the neutrality period, and that sabotage activities on the part of Germans, German-Americans, and Germanophile foreigners were carried out within the United States boundaries.

In the extensive indictment prepared by the American Government there are contained a series of assertions about orders which you are supposed to have received from the military authorities with reference to

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the United States, and also about the activities which you are, in addition, supposed to have carried on there. In these matters, your evidence will be referred to.

The Foreign Office could forward to you the whole "dossier" with the request that you should give your opinion on it in writing. The dossier is, however, so extensive that it would mean exceedingly hard work for you to make yourself familiar with it. Furthermore, on the individual points of the indictment there are a whole series of assertions by other witnesses to be considered, which are of importance for the handling of the dossier.

In order to spare you such labour, and in order to ensure the safe delivery in your hands of certain relevant depositions, I should like to request you to come to Berlin for an examination of the dossier. The matter will then allow of a much quicker and more satisfactory settlement. The cost of the journey and of your stay here will, naturally, be borne by the Foreign Office.

I feel I should therefore ask you to communicate with me as soon as possible, stating whether you are ready to come here, and, if so, on what day we may expect you here. As the action will shortly be brought before the court, the matter is most urgent.

By order

(*Signed*) HOSSENFELDER.
Legations-Rat.

I read this letter as written to me in good faith, and went to Berlin assuming the Foreign Office were acting in good faith. I never suspected that behind the phrase: "It would mean exceedingly hard work for you to make yourself

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familiar with the dossier", there lay any dishonest intentions.

But once on the spot, the meaning of that remark became obvious: on no condition was I to be allowed to see the "dossier." The statement they wanted me to sign was to be an abstract statement, a kind of blank cheque.

Supposing the statement conflicted with evidence already laid before the Americans?

It was a trap! For my testimony would, from then on, be discredited.

"Nothing doing!" I said to myself. "I must keep steady."

The letter had sounded so good and so reasonable.

I was in the Hotel Adlon, laid up, and totally unable to move; the journey had proved too much, the Königsee insisted upon its rights. So the Auswärtige Amt sent one of their bright young men to pay me an unexpected visit, in the hope that a few questions, and a few answers, might bring to a definite conclusion a matter, which had by now been the subject of a decade of argumentation. . . .

The Wilhelmstrasse were indeed in a remarkable hurry. What was behind that hurry?

No doubt, it was all a trap. The young fellow was so insistent that I began to ask myself whether they feared, or whether they hoped, I was going to die.

Two days later I had recuperated sufficiently to limp over and appear in person at the Auswärtige Amt.

Herr Hossenfelder received me—the same man who had been German Consul in New York in 1915, who, with the help of a password, had succeeded in getting some prominent Irish-Americans, fiercely hostile to Great Britain, to come and look me up at my stately office in Cedar Street, off Wall Street.

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I rejoiced. If Hossenfelder was the man who had been appointed the task of clearing up the mess—the affair of the "Sabotage Cases" was nothing less—then the Foreign Office had put the right man in the right place.

I opened the discussion cheerfully. . . .

But what was this?

After a few empty courtesies, it was plain that Dr. Hossenfelder was trying to evade the main issue.

"Considering your poor health," he proceeded, "I am afraid you will not be able to stand the strain of a long discussion. My young assistant gained the same impression when he looked you up at the Adlon the other day. Could you not, quite simply, state that you do not remember anything about all these matters?"

My poor body, so sore and ill, prevented me from bursting into laughter.

"I do not remember? I not remember what has been my life, indeed the whole content of my life, ever since I left Berlin in March 1915? My dear *Herr Legations-Rat*, if you yourself had gone through what I have gone through, if you had only seen the amiable correspondence which I have had with Berlin—about matters of my own personal concern—ever since my home-coming in 1921——: Did you never hear about the Reichstag Investigation Committee, before which I stated in full detail what took place in America? Do you think that in that brief spell of five years, since that Committee meeting, I—do not remember? Quite the contrary, my dear *Herr Legations-Rat*, quite the contrary! My memory is fresher than ever before, and I am sorry for you if you yourself have forgotten what happened in America in 1915, when we were. . . . Can it be really *you* who are asking me to state in writing, 'I do not remember'? Don't you remember how, as

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Germany's Consul in New York, you sent those Irishmen to my office? . . . *Aber Herr Legations-Rat!*"

"But you would help Germany immensely now, if . . ."

"Help Germany? That goes without saying: I will help Germany when and wherever I can; but I do not think that is the issue here."

I was, by this time, pacing up and down his room. Dumbfounded, the *Herr Legations-Rat* sat back in his massive armchair behind the massive desk, a massive Teuton, staring at the physical wreck in front of him.

But physical wreck though I was, I could rise to the occasion: in this intense moment; Königsee or no Königsee, all my old strength and energy were with me once again.

"Help Germany? Of course, to help Germany is my duty as a patriot. But would *this* be patriotism?"

I stopped and faced the man:

"Is perjury patriotism?"

At this question he jumped up from his chair; but I went on:—

"I am sorry for you, and for your friends Papen and Bernstorff, and all the rest of those who have committed perjury already. If they think this is patriotism, they don't know what patriotism signifies. To me, patriotism and honour are synonymous. A propos *honour*: *you* are handling these sabotage cases, aren't you? So you will remember that one of the first paragraphs of the agreement with the Americans lays down that Germany is in *honour bound*—do you hear me?—IN HONOUR BOUND!"

Dr. Hossenfelder stood there, gaping.

A miserable fellow. Still, I reflected, this is, after all, Germany. This is the country I fought for: I am bound to it by all the ties of blood, by centuries of family tradition.

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This type of upstart could not be allowed to stand between my country and me.

I toned down:

"Try to draft a statement, and I will see how far I can stretch my conscience, if it is a question of helping Germany. You can rely upon me that what can be done will be done."—We parted.

* * * * *

Once in the neighbourhood of the Treasury, I looked in and there met another *Rat*.

He was a disreputable-looking ruffian, who at once started bellowing at me, asking why I had "bothered the Treasury over Mr. Battle's fee—not to mention my own personal claim about some restitution of out-of-pocket expenses."

The man was enraged to the point of convulsions that I should have had the audacity to put forward such "preposterous" demands.

And to think that I had spoken so gently to them—up till that moment!

Fortunately for the *Herr Rat*, I was still too feeble to pay him back in his own coin.

I felt like planting my fist in the broad face of this ranting creature. Fate had been kind to him in making me fall into the Königsee. I had no strength to strike him with, angry though I was.

I dashed over to the Auswärtige Amt, and told the *Herr Legations-Rat* about the splendid ovation I had just received at the Treasury where I had mentioned the American lawyer's fee, and the refunding of advances made by me to a grateful Government.

"*Dankbares Reich!*" I flung the words in his face, and left him gasping.

I felt chirpy now,—positively chirpy.

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A hearty dinner with some friends, and off I went, by the night-express, leaving Berlin miles and miles behind.

* * * * *

Little did I imagine that, while I had been sitting in the pleasant surroundings of a *Berliner Weinstube*, a telephone message had been sent out from Herr Hossenfelder's room to his counterpart in the Treasury:—

"We are no longer interested in Rintelen's claims, whatever they may be, being satisfied."

This amounted to a pretty piece of blackmail—indirect blackmail, it is true, but blackmail none the less!

When, later on, I was informed of this game, my sarcasm made me coin on the spot a jaunty piece of alliteration, which I think sums up the case fairly well:

"*No perjury?—No pay, no pension, no position!*"

So be it: the new situation gave me—and gives me—a wonderful sense of superiority, and of complete self-reliance. From now on I possessed a sovereign independence in all respects and in every domain.

* * * * *

It struck me, on reflection, that the Government departments in Berlin seemed to have a sort of "tariff" of rewards for war service.

Not a single document, not one piece of "service" correspondence of mine ever fell into enemy's hands.

My British adversaries searched the good ship *Noordam* from top to keelson while she lay off Ramsgate in August 1915, and found nothing—except a few papers I intended them to find!

It goes without saying that the documents they were hunting for *were* on board that ship; but I am not going to disclose what exact spot I had chosen to hide them in.

That secret, as also my method of corresponding with

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Berlin while I was at Donington Hall, I do not intend to reveal *even* to the late Director of Naval Intelligence. . . . It will be given by me to the British Nation, or rather those interested in knowing, as a "wedding present" on the day that I am definitely made a British citizen!

I remember how red in the face the Hon. Dudley Ward, M.P., became on that Friday, the 13th of August, 1915, and how furious his collaborators in the search, when they found that the correspondence I had arranged should be discovered by them on board the *Noordam* referred almost exclusively to the affairs of the Mexico North-Western Railway Company and its poor bondholders, so ably represented by me, then the Swiss business man, Monsieur Emile Gaché.

The American Secret Service fared no better. No raid or incursion of theirs ever led to the discovery of a compromising paper, although the office furniture I had left behind me was smashed into small pieces.

Herr Doktor Albert's achievement was altogether different: he possessed the probably unique distinction of being able, in spite of the noise, to go to sleep in the New York Elevated Railway. During one Midsummer Day's Dream he was so unfortunate as to "lose his attaché-case."

Herr Hauptmann Papen, on the other hand, had a predilection for trinities. He was the victim of:

(1) A raid in his New York office.

(2) A raid on his trunks, which in December 1915 were carried by the same ship *Noordam*, with himself on board, right into the port of Falmouth.

(3) A raid on his tent in Palestine by British cavalry under Lord Allenby, in the autumn of 1918.

A consideration of the subsequent history of myself,

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Herr Doktor Albert and Herr Hauptmann Papen, will lead one to draw up the following "tariff":

GRADE.	*No. of Occasions when Documents Lost.*	REWARD.
C	On *no* occasion.	No pay. No pension. No position.
B	On *one* occasion.	Under-Secretaryship of State in Reich Chancellor's Office.
A	On *three* occasions.	*Kanzler des Zweiten Reiches.* Chancellor of the Second Reich.

"*So wird das Gut ebelohnt, und das Böse bestraft!*" ("Thus is the good rewarded, and the wicked punished!")

* * * * *

The Bavarian mountains were the retreat I had selected, in order to recover finally from the Königsee shock. On the way I meant to pay a brief call on friends in Frankfort.

But even *my* heart would stand no further nonsense; at Frankfort it gave me a plain warning: "You can't treat me like this, my dear fellow," it kept repeating to me in syncopated rhythm.

"If you say so . . .," I answered, and the next day I was in the consulting-room of one of the greatest specialists in Düsseldorf, Professor Hoffmann, a fine-featured man, with a wistful expression, but lots of fun in his eyes.

He examined me up and down, and back and front, pausing a moment to turn round and mutter something to a nurse, who promptly left the room.

When he had finished I went back to the chair where I had put my clothes: they had gone. I searched about me for a moment, but in vain.

A reproachful look from me, a paternal look from Professor Hoffmann—that was all the argument we had.

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"You will stay here with me in my sanatorium for the next two months. You can get your clothes back after that."

The price for the Königsee was to be paid, after all.

* * * * *

As I sat musing in my comfortable easy-chair on the sun-terrace of Professor Hoffmann's private sanatorium, I allowed my mind to review the scenes that had taken place in the Wilhelmstrasse.

If this was the line they intended to take over the sabotage affairs of 1915–1916, which were already ten years old, what a mess they would land themselves in!

I felt restless and anxious: this silly game of theirs was certain to involve me in a lot of controversy. . . .

Professor Hoffmann noticed I was ill at ease.

His "War" had taken place behind the front, fighting for the lives of wounded soldiers, German, French, Belgian, British; and his wonderful success with them, together with the possibility of working and thinking free from any war-spirit, had given him a deep satisfaction, a look of happy repose, and a profound and impartial insight into men's minds.

"Why are you so restless? What is on your mind?"

I told him the whole long story.

As I unfolded my tale, he shook his head, slowly at first, and then more vehemently.

"Keep one straight line; remain unshakeable; don't let anyone, come what may, come whence it may, make you deviate from your course. Remain firm by the truth and your honour. . . . You have done your duty, and a full measure of it. No matter what that gang in Berlin may do —*oh! diese Bande!*" he interrupted himself indignantly,

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and, turning to me: "Find satisfaction within yourself: '*L'effort porte en soi-même sa récompense.*'"

Firmer than ever before, I was determined to follow one unalterable course: the truth, and nothing but the truth,—not even "stretching of conscience", of which I had thought for a moment when in Berlin.

* * * * *

Another week went by, and the Professor and I found cause for shouts of laughter.

The joke was provided by the Wilhelmstrasse—as so often since 1915—and an excellent jest it was!

The courteous letter from the Auswärtige Amt, of the 23rd of February, had, as a matter of course, contained the remark that the expenses incurred by me in travelling to, and staying in, Berlin would be refunded as my due.

Towards the end of March, when I was engaged in the routine balancing of my day-to-day account, I noticed that no remittance from Berlin had come to hand since.

It did not occur to me for a moment that this was due to anything but an oversight—or, at worst, dilatoriness.

So I took pen and ink, and wrote a casual note reminding the cashier's office of the Auswärtige Amt of the small debt outstanding—something like 150 or 200 marks.

One morning's mail brought a letter in reply, which ran as follows:

> "In view of the fact that you declined to make any statement in the matter under discussion, the Auswärtige Amt sees no reason to refund you expenses."

I promptly retorted:

> "Inasmuch as the closing sentences of your letter of February 23rd contain a definite acknowledgment of your indebtedness, I shall instruct my solicitors to

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recover the amount due from you by way of an *Urkunden-Prozess.*" (This is a summary procedure on the basis of documentary evidence.) " In this case it will, I am afraid, be impossible to prevent the underlying cause of the dispute from being brought before the court. I expect to receive a remittance in settlement within five days, failing which I shall advise my solicitors to institute proceedings."

On the morning of the fifth day the postman brought a registered letter; I signed the receipt.

An ultimatum was, in those days at least, the only language Berlin was able to understand.

I had wanted to show those poor silly quill-drivers some clemency; I knew to what lengths they were capable of going, and wished to spare them and the Reich the ignominy of having the issue on a case involving some 30 million dollars, jeopardised by a refusal on the part of a few bureaucrats to refund me 175 marks travelling expenses.

I had therefore sent my letter threatening legal action, not to Herr Hossenfelder, of the Legal Section in the Auswärtige Amt, but to his chief, the *Ministerial-Direktor* in charge of American relations, Dr. de Haas—one of the most capable and intelligent men I have ever met in the Wilhelmstrasse; and to prevent any miscarriage, I had put my letter in a special envelope, and addressed it to Dr. de Haas personally; and it was on his express orders that the debt to me was immediately paid.

What would the Americans have thought if they had then known that their relations with the Reich were actually being endangered—not over any question of the Freedom of the Seas, or Unrestricted Submarine Warfare, but over a sum of 40 dollars?

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In some ways I am sorry the Foreign Office paid up. For I thereby lost the opportunity of repeating before an open court what the Reichstag Investigation Committee had buried and concealed from the German people—the whole sabotage mission of 1915.

Dr. de Haas also got in touch with me on his own account. He suggested that I should try out the Americans to see the extent of their case and, if necessary, if they would accept a compromise.

His letter, which was an invitation that I should come and see him at the Foreign Office some time, contained a sentence which was particularly gratifying to me, as I was, at the time, the target of Herr Hossenfelder's and his crew's rancour. They were indulging in a campaign of mud-slinging which did not worry me personally more than a pea-shooter worries an elephant.

The invitation—which was the primary object of the letter—was couched in terms of such genuine understanding that I felt I could not answer by a "no",—the less so as he had, by a stroke of the pen, put an end to the quill-drivers' "penny-foolishness."

But I could not go at once, as I had in the meantime, on Professor Hoffmann's advice, decided to go on a sea-voyage, in order to become as strong as before,—a sea-voyage which I decided should take me to my "dear old America."

* * * * *

My journey took me through the still war-scarred provinces of the North of France:—Maubeuge, Saint Quentin, Compiègne. What memories! How often these names have sounded in my ears, from the great break-through of March 1918, and the final tragedy!

At last—Paris! Paris, for the first time since the War.

I felt very shy: it was some hours before I found my

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balance, and was able to realise that this was enemy territory no longer.

Everything seemed so strange, so ghost-like. I climbed to the top of the Eiffel Tower, from where, with the naked eye, one can clearly discern how near our troops had been to having victory within their grasp.

To the North stood the Fort du Mont Valérien, looking as solid as ever; the Mont Valérien, first to hoist the white flag in 1871, unconquerable half a century later.

I asked the old crony who lent me a pair of field-glasses, to point the direction of this or that spot I was particularly interested in.

She answered very competently, calling me " Mister " and interspersing her replies with a few English phrases she had no doubt learnt from Tommies on leave.

My appearance often leads to my being taken, when on the Continent, for an Englishman, and my accent is such that at least colonials may be deceived.

In fact, I might remind those of my present readers who have read *The Dark Invader* of the incident when I met the war-time British Naval Attaché in Washington, on a beach in Connecticut, and managed to pass myself off on him as an Englishman. The story sounds improbable, but it is true, the explanation being that Captain G—— was Australian-born—which was just a piece of luck for me!

The old crony on the Eiffel Tower kept chanting a refrain which began to irritate me:

" *Ah mais, Mister, les sales Boches, les sales Boches. . . .*"

I let her chatter. My thoughts turned back—to August, to September, 1914. . . .

Yes: over there Kluck's advance guard had reached forward—and had yet failed.

But *was* it a failure? Or had Destiny, by preventing him

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from continuing his advance, spared our armies the greatest *débâcle* in history?

Much has been said, and told and described; but one thing is inexorable truth: had Colonel Hentsch not given the order to retreat in time, the First, the Second, the Third, the Fourth, nay even the Fifth German Armies, would have walked into the trap that lay between the Marne and the Seine, both soon to swell from days of ceaseless rain, with the British Army, Galliéni, and Maunoury in the rear, and all their communications cut!

"Unus homo nobis *agendo* restituit rem——": Colonel Hentsch. . . .

Well, too late now.

Sad at heart, I descended from the platform, and took a drink in the bar to forget all about it, for the moment at least.

* * * * *

Paris: Gare Saint Lazare, and on to Cherbourg. . . .

Nantucket lightship: soon the bay of New York was before me. I did not find the courage to give more than casual glances to port, to the New Jersey side, the scene of my long list of "crimes," the ships set on fire in 1915. . . . I felt uneasy, somehow. I preferred to admire what lay to starboard: New York's *dernier cri* in sky-scraper building.

The first two men I looked up in New York were, of course, Mr. George Gordon Battle, my staunch ally, and Judge John C. Knox, the former Public Prosecutor, my staunch adversary.

To-day the two men vied with one another in cordiality, though Judge Knox could not help suddenly breaking out into a smile he did his utmost to control, but which showed plainly enough which way his thoughts were wandering. . . .

We enjoyed our luncheon together in the famous Post-

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Keller of the Woolworth Building, and except for the occasional irrepressible grin, no one could have guessed that our earlier relations had been—well, what they were.

* * * * *

With the help of Mr. Battle, still my advocate, I went carefully over the ground. Each and every detail of what had actually occurred during the War, and of what had been brought to light since then, was discussed, and thoughtfully weighed; no avenue of approach to the ticklish subject of the sabotage cases, in so far as my connection with them was concerned, was left unexplored.

Here was high explosive, and in plenty: no doubt about that. I was more than ever convinced I must remain on my guard, must watch my step, and adopt an unshakeably firm and definite attitude.

Mr. Battle's advice satisfied me as to where the pitfalls were, and what the traps were I must avoid. I felt that whereas I had hitherto only *intuitively* realised where I stood, I now *knew*.

* * * * *

Strengthened by the experience I had gained during these brief weeks, I set sail for Berlin and the Wilhelmstrasse —not failing, however, to arrange for a break-of-journey at my newly re-discovered port of call—Paris!

Thus fortified, I dropped in one morning at the Auswärtige Amt.

* * * * *

Herr Doktor de Haas, the chief of the Anglo-American Department, immediately waved his secretary out of the room, and, running to the door to greet me, called out:—

"*Gott sei Dank, dass ich Sie nun auch persönlich kennen lerne!*"

("At last I can get to know you personally.")

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"Yes: this is me. Have a good look at me, Herr Ministerial-Direktor!"

What a different atmosphere! What a pleasant way of welcoming one! This showed me the Foreign Office in a new light. A most agreeable surprise! I felt no tension at all.

"Do sit down; make yourself comfortable. . . . Good news, eh? I hear you have been to America. What have they got to say over there?"

"Not exactly cheerful news; but the letter you had suggested I should write to feel the ground, throwing out hints about a compromise—I tried adding a bit of bluff, to season it, you know—well, it led to quite some confusion. The long and short of it, Herr Ministerial-Direktor, is that they have *not* fallen for our little game. Besides, I am afraid, to judge by what I saw in America, that they have material in plenty. . . .

"Then there is something else. Do you know, there sits in London an old bear with a sore head who was in charge of the Naval Intelligence at the Admiralty, and I have an idea he has turned over to the Americans so many intercepted messages from Berlin to our Embassy in Washington, and vice versa, that we may have to put up a stiff fight if we want to win the case for the German side."

"Who is this old bear of yours?"

"*Nein*, Herr Ministerial-Direktor: not *my* old bear; his officers gave him that nickname. He is Admiral Hall, Admiral Sir Reginald Hall."

By eleven o'clock that night, Dr. de Haas and I had come to a conclusion:

A compromise with the Americans was the only reasonable way.

"Very good, then: I've satisfied myself you are right. Would you undertake to try to get them to 'fix on' a com-

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promise by proceeding personally to the United States? Would 12,000 marks for travelling expenses be sufficient for your requirements?"

"Of course, Herr Ministerial-Direktor. I am not in the habit of drinking champagne at the Reich's expense. . . . Provided it does not take half a century to stop the Herr *Legations-Rat's* wild-goose chasing, we ought to know one way or the other quite soon."

"When can you embark for America, Herr Kapitän?"

"Not so fast, Herr Ministerial-Direktor! I shall *first* set sail for England, and I shall look up my ferocious enemy, Admiral Hall. The ice has been broken already, when I was in London a little while ago."

"You have been in London already? How did they receive you? Do you think you have any chance with them?"

"Well, judge yourself from my first experience there. I arrived in London, at Liverpool Street Station, like any Tom, Dick or Harry, uninspected—just as if there had never been a war, and as if no discourteous words had ever been exchanged between me, or Germans generally, and the English. I then called at the Admiralty, where the hall-porter recognised me at once, and welcomed me gaily as the gentleman who, in 1915, had pretended "he hadn't time" to sign the visitor's book. You see, if I'd signed 'Gaché,' the 'Swiss,' I pretended to be then, I should have been uttering a forged document; and I could hardly sign 'Rintelen'—not *then*!

"The precaution was wisely taken, by the way, for when I passed through the hall again, on my way out, after having 'surrendered,' I noticed Sir Reginald Hall look in the book to see what I had done, and his features expressed 'annoyance' at seeing I had not fallen into the trap.

"But to return. I was informed by the porter that Sir

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ADMIRAL SIR REGINALD HALL

From a sketch by Louis Raemaekers

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Reginald Hall was no longer at the Admiralty. So I walked over to the House of Commons—he is now a Member—and left my card, as the House had been prorogued."

"Yes—and . . .? What then?"

"The following morning I had an invitation to lunch at the Garrick Club. That's English!"

"Yes; they are decent fellows: they really are. I have occasion to know that from my job, here in my Department."

"So you see, Herr Ministerial-Direktor, I think I can afford to go and look him up for a second time. Besides, the Reichs-Wehr-Ministerium have asked me to sound the Admiralty, when I am next in London, as to whether we could not now send a Naval Attaché to the German Embassy in London, and Admiral Hall would be the best man to approach.

"I am afraid they will turn the idea down, but then, my inquiry through him will be so informal that the prestige of the Reich will certainly not suffer. Besides, I hope Admiral Hall can enlighten us about the fate of a score, still unaccounted for, of the one-hundred and ninety-nine U-boats sunk during the War."

(I may mention here that the Naval Attaché suggestion *was* turned down. It was only in the early part of 1933, seven years later, under the Chancellorship of General von Schleicher, that the privilege was granted.)

"All right, then, Herr Kapitän," said Dr. de Haas; "I expect to hear from you from London before you proceed to America." And he added with a smile, "This time your travelling expenses *will* be paid. It is I personally who ask you to undertake the journey."

We parted.

I went to London.

* * * * *

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CHAPTER IX

1927

ONE crisp morning in January when I had reached London, the postman brought me an extremely kindly worded letter—an invitation to dine at Admiral Hall's house.

I felt proud and pleased at receiving such an invitation from one whose antagonist and enemy I had been, all the more so as diplomatic relations between our two countries were still limited to little more than cold, formal, official functions.

Here was nothing cold, or formal, or official. I met with a warm-hearted reception in an exquisite setting.

A thrill of emotion ran through me when a dignified, yet vivacious lady stepped forward, her hand outstretched to greet me,—Lady Hall.

A friendship sprang up between us that grew into a bond of mutual confidence, not unlike that which can exist between a boy and his mother.

Only six years later, almost to the day, I was to be among the mourners in the Parish Church of Lyndhurst—my last gesture of gratitude for the kind affection I had done so little to earn.

At that dinner-party in 1927, Lady Hall was still the vigorous, lively hostess, an artist easily and invisibly manipulating a difficult craft.

Admiral Hall's children were there, also several admirals and Members of Parliament, and another most interesting personality, A. E. W. Mason, with whom, too, ties of friendship came to link me in time.

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In the midst of a lively conversation when port was being passed round, the butler brought in a telegram.

"A telegram?"

"Yes, for Captain Rintelen."

What was that? Who on earth could be so silly as to send a telegram to me in the house of a family where I was hardly even an acquaintance.

Die Wilhelmstrasse!

In a casual way I had "reported" to Berlin that an opportunity might present itself of discovering whether the Admiral had at his disposal any evidence bearing on the sabotage cases, which might be disadvantageous to Germany.

More than this I had not so much as hinted. And this is what it had led to: a telegram addressed to my hostess's house!

I tried to put it in my pocket without opening it: but the Admiral encouraged me to read it.

"Break off negotiations. Stop. Decision reached here to proceed along strictly legal lines."

Tact! Tact!! Tact!!!

I longed for the ground to open and swallow me up; for the Admiral could not help observing that something was wrong; he was afraid it was a personal affair.

This made it all the more difficult for me to explain away how this telegram had been sent to his house.

Loyalty forbade me to mention by whom the telegram had been sent.

* * * * *

A few days later the following letter came from Dr. de Haas in Berlin, to whom I had, in no uncertain terms, expressed what I felt about this telegram affair.

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Berlin, January 21, 1927.

Auswärtiges Amt.

DEAR SIR,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 19th inst. In order to avoid misunderstandings, I should like to answer your question briefly as follows. In the discussions which have been taking place over the matter in question, the pros and cons were freely debated, and it was decided that there is so much to be said against efforts towards a compromise that the idea has been abandoned. I could not but acquiesce in this decision, though with a heavy heart, and I must now see how we can further our object in some other way.

I await your kind suggestions on this matter, and remain meanwhile,

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*) W. DE HAAS.

* * * * *

While a reasoned and reasonable man like Herr de Haas took the trouble to keep in touch with me during the time I was in London, the other school, thinking they knew better, disdained the sixpence at their feet—the compromise—in order to reach out for the moon—the vain hope that America might return to Germany the vast amount of property sequestrated during the War without the claims of her own citizens being *first* provided for.

The "moon-and-sixpence" school in the meantime mobilised half the country—courts and what not—to have me "examined" over what had happened in America during the War!

Now, I had left clear instructions with my German

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solicitors to explain that any evidence which I might give could but be unfavourable to the cause of the Reich; a fact which any child should have been able to see.

But the " moon-and-sixpence " people went on and on, claiming that they " searched " for me all over Germany, while they must have known from my numerous letters that I was peacefully living in London, learning once again the taste of boiled cabbages and Yorkshire pudding, and all the other delicacies which may be called most typically English.

This " stage search " went on gaily, though it was only a question of time before the Americans got in an ill-humour about it all.

I had offered my help.

My help was not wanted.

" Whom the gods wish to destroy . . ." him they send on a wild-goose chase.

Let them chase!

* * * * *

Germany, under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, had had to surrender a vast number of submarines, and any completed or unfinished motors for submarines-to-be.

The French Navy had decided to put into active service as many of the latterly-constructed U-boats as could be made available in those years, with the result, surprising to a trained eye, that one could observe cruising in the Channel whole flotillas of German U-boats flying the French tricolor!

The British Admiralty, for reasons of its own, appeared not to favour such a course. As a consequence, scores of German submarine motors, in excellent condition, were threatening to rot in London warehouses.

An enterprising firm of engineers, half-British, half-French, hit upon the idea that I might be the man to

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arrange with the French Ministry of Marine for these motors to be put to good service, if only as "spares," for French submarines of German "extraction."

I was considered to be specially well suited for this purpose, as having been in the "Submarine Warfare Department" of the Naval War Staff in Berlin, until the spring of 1915.

That was perfectly true, though I have never in my life set foot on any submarine! Staff work and international legalities can, after all, be attended to, even without active experience.

Well, why should I not try?

The French Naval Attaché in London, Commandant T——, whom I had met at a St. James's Street club, expressed doubts "*si l'on peut ou veut traiter avec vous.*"

With this highly encouraging send-off, I embarked for Paris.

There *was* no obstacle.

Contrary to my friend's, the Attaché's, forebodings, the officers of the *Etat-Major de la Marine*, once they had got over their astonishment at seeing me, of all people, as the intermediary between England and France, accorded me a sincere and cordial reception.

"We know all about you."

"All the better for me and the submarine motors."

Many a bottle of luscious wine accompanied our negotiations. Many an amusing episode of war-time was recounted to me, of the days when the French Navy cruised the Mediterranean hunting for U-boats,—for "Fritz," as the French officers called them. Not once did I hear the "famous" Army expression, with "B" as its first letter. . . .

Always "Fritz."

Fritz and French were now friends.

* * * * *

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Summer came round, and in spite of all charms which Paris life offers, we decided that the heat was too intense for negotiations.

Dieppe, or rather the Châlet du Bas Fort Blanc, not far out, became my headquarters.

"*Dieppe, le paradis du homard et de la langouste.*"

Amusingly enough, it was while I was there that the news reached me that those in Berlin who had been fondling the hope that by now I must be a starving man, who could be brought to his knees by "no pay, no pension, no position," had made inquiries about "how I was doing."

How I was doing?

I asked my lawyers to convey my greetings to the solicitous inquirers:

"Rintelen is doing well—on lobster and Anjou."

* * * * *

It was in the Théâtre du Casino at Dieppe that I experienced the moving revelation that one man had known how to penetrate into the depths of the true British soul.

An English cast, chosen for the purpose, in a spirit of genuine sincerity performed *Journey's End*, by R. C. Sheriff.

Outside were the indescribable beauty and peace which only the sea can diffuse into one's heart and thoughts.

For hours afterwards I paced up and down by the sea, in the darkness, to allow my soul to calm down from its intense emotion, lulled into peace by the eternal miracle—the sound of the waves at high tide.

At length, the angry growl of the receding waves made me realise how deep into the night I had walked.

Up till then, war propaganda, the vituperations of a hostile press, and all the rest, had been almost my only

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spiritual nourishment so far as the enemy's side of war-time psychology was concerned.

Here I had been able to gain, for the first time, a true insight into what was going on in the minds of those in the opposite trenches, the other camp.

Not since the War had I seen a British play acted.

Not since the War had I had the opportunity of studying the Englishman's reactions to the Great Tragedy as it can best be revealed through a conflict presented in dramatic form.

And to think that this revelation of the British outlook, so forcibly depicted, should be vouchsafed me on the soil of France!

In Dieppe, for years within hearing of the thunder of ceaseless gun-fire, almost within range!

* * * * *

In September of the same year, 1927, my daughter, Marie-Luise, then just beginning to peep out into the world, suggested to me that the friendship which had so happily sprung up between us during the last four or five years might be cemented by a visit to my sister, who lived in Sicily.

Our first contact had revealed to us how different our natures were: but, like the opposite poles of a magnet, our mutual attraction was all the stronger.

We had the brightest of prospects ahead of us: a beautiful garden mounting from terrace to terrace up the slopes of Etna, a magnificent view over the purple sea, oranges and lemons just ripening on the trees, endless masses, field upon field, of flowers such as only this island can bear and only the ancient Greek poets have been able to describe.

A day had scarcely gone by before I was completely

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forgotten, as my sister expressed it. "*Toute la jeunesse dorée*"—young men she had never seen before in her house came along one and all on horse, mule, cart, car, even on foot, to pay calls long overdue!

I did not feel in the least hurt; but the object of our stay on the Isle of Dreams was to find an opportunity for making one another's deeper acquaintance! Now our chances of ever doing so were all stolen away by the young men of Catania and Taormina!

Still, once an opportunity did arise. We toured, the two of us, over the whole island, finally to land in Palermo, at the opposite corner of Sicily; and no sooner had the manager of the 'Grande Albergo' noticed us stepping out of the car, than he came hurriedly forward anxiously inquiring in German:

"*Und für dies junge Paar, Doppel-Zimmer mit Bad?*"
("And for this young couple, a double room and bath?")

Nothing has cemented our friendship more strongly than this "mistake." Weeks and months of living side by side could not have brought about a more complete breakdown of the barriers which the War and six years of separation had erected between father and daughter.

* * * * *

On our homeward journey we parted in Florence; she returning to Berlin, to her mother, my former wife's home, while I decided to establish my headquarters in Paris, far away from the strife that went on inside the Auswärtige Amt, as to whether it was a wiser policy to have me testify, or have me not testify, in the American sabotage claims.

Towards the end of the year my solicitors in Berlin prevailed upon me to put an end to perpetual correspondence

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with this or that Government department, over the refunding of my personal outlay during the time I was in America in 1915.

Consequently, it was decided that an action should be brought against the Reich Government, and the Treasury in particular, to recover the sums due, and a detailed brief was drawn up.

This was presented to the Treasury, with a covering note from my lawyers stating that unless my capital outlay plus interest at compound rate were paid, the *Landgericht* in Berlin would have to be petitioned to hear the case.

The Treasury and the Foreign Office read the brief and appeared somewhat impressed by its contents: for, after some deliberation between them, it was decided to offer me a compromise.

It was by no means to their liking to have the sabotage cases thrashed out in open court—least of all in Berlin!

My solicitors advised me, in view of this argument, to call down the curtain; I accepted, though a compromise was not at all to my taste, as it would allow, once again, an opportunity to clarify the character of my "mission" in 1915 to slip by.

The discussions nevertheless dragged on into 1928, and it was only on the personal intervention of General Heye, the Commander-in-Chief of the Reichswehr, that I decided to agree to the terms offered.

Furthermore, the Government departments concerned demanded that I should sign a document whereby I renounced any further claim upon the Reich. My solicitor explained to me that the Government might be capable of never refunding me anything at all if I did not sign: so I signed, "at the point of the purse."

I received a compromise payment of 5,000 gold-marks,

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the equivalent of £250 at par; that is, of principal alone. The rest of the principal and all the interest that would have accrued on the whole of my capital outlay, over nearly fourteen years, will for good and for ever be an unredeemable item on my Loss Account, for services rendered in carrying out my dark invasion, to save the lives of fellow-countrymen serving in French and Flemish trenches.

Once again I left my Berlin, full of pride for my grateful Government. I had signed my *Versailler Diktat.*

* * * * *

While I was still in Paris, just before going to Berlin, I had received—I might almost say, to my shame—a reminder from the office of Mr. George Gordon Battle that his fee for my defence in 1917 still remained unpaid.

I sent it on to Berlin. The matter was, so I felt, ever so much more important in comparison to the mere trifle of my salary plus expenses.

When I went there myself I tried to reinforce this letter by persuasion, and an appeal to their decency.

The Auswärtige Amt, however, gave me the astonishing explanation that if the Reich Government were to pay that fee, it would be tantamount to admitting its *responsibility* for my mission to America!

"If that is your point of view now," I said, "I shall call myself henceforth an honorary *franctireur*; but rest assured: events and facts will prove stronger than you. . . ."

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CHAPTER X

1928

IF the Reich Government failed to pay Mr. Battle's fee, I might pay it out of my own pocket; but if I wished to do so, there remained the problem of how to extract ten thousand dollars from my "war salary" of exactly four dollars, a puzzle which was to provide me with cerebral exercise every morning for some time to come.

Berlin, as it was to discover in the course of the following years, to its discomfort, continued to be ignorant of the ethics of the Bar, by which counsel remains bound to stand by his client, and him alone, even if the latter should fall into arrears of payment for fees due.

"*Ignorantia legis neminem excusat.*" ("Ignorance of the law is no excuse.")

Neither does it pay.

The attitude of Berlin towards Mr. Battle had long since become a by-word among American jurists—judges and barristers alike. In fact, I learned through my friends in New York that the New York Bar Association was, in the beginning of 1928, seriously considering whether formal proceedings against the German Government should not be started, and whether their colleague's fee should not be recovered out of the vast amount of German property still under war-time sequestration in America.

In due course, rumours as to this state of affairs reached the ears of the Mixed Claims Commission too, which drew certain inevitable conclusions as regards Germany's good

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faith, with the result that whenever Berlin, through its Agent, nominated for the purpose, presented documents in evidence, such as letters, written statements, or affidavits, the Mixed Claims Commission would request Mr. Battle kindly to submit, on their behalf, each piece of evidence to his client—for approval!

The faithful client sat in Paris, and studied with growing astonishment the voluminous statements submitted to him, and signed by fellow-countrymen of his.

Matters which seemed to have been definitely dealt with, disposed of, and settled once and for all before the Reichstag Investigation Committee in the year 1921, made their reappearance in 1928—and in a form that one may aptly call " Ersatz truth."

With a good deal of merriment—not quite unmixed, I admit—I read and re-read document after document.

My cries of surprise were answered by the excited " toot toot " of the Paris taxis, or the pained screech of a Boulevard autobus, as it tried to draw up just past my hotel.

" Well," I exclaimed aloud to myself, " if they are out to ruin their country's case, I see no way of saving them. They are ' in honour bound . . .'! "

* * * * *

One late afternoon, I think it was in April or May, just before I went to take up residence again in my Normandy châlet, to wash off in the surf the dust Paris water could not rid me of, I received a mysterious telephone message.

My caller, at the other end of the line, suggested *un rendez-vous*, while refusing to explain who he was; and I would certainly have hung up the receiver angrily at the stranger's proposal had it not been for two reasons.

The first was that my interviewer-to-be said something

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like " your Berlin friends," a phrase which at all times made me prick up my ears.

The second, that he suggested a room in the Hôtel Crillon as a meeting place. Hôtel Crillon, after all, is a good visiting-card. So off I went.

A well-dressed gentleman received me, and the man in his company introduced himself as a representative of the Sûreté Générale, his badge leaving no room for doubt.

" Apéritifs " were then most courteously offered, served—and taken.

The two strangers were evidently anxious to prepare me for a bit of a surprise.

The gentleman with the American accent produced a document, which bore every indication of having had its origin in Berlin.

It was a copy, with reference numbers, that reminded me of those I received and despatched while I worked at the Admiralty in Berlin during the War.

" Well, what is it? "

" Er—do have another apéritif; it will fortify you."

I began to read the document aloud; and suddenly I was frightfully sober.

But those who had written the document—had they been quite sober? Judge for yourselves—and remember how many letters had been exchanged between Government departments in Berlin and myself during the last four or five years :

> " The Mixed Claims Commission is hereby informed that the testimony of the witness Rintelen cannot be obtained, as he himself cannot be located."

Are you surprised that I took *another* apéritif?

With an amiable smile, the gentleman representing the

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Sûreté Générale congratulated me on having so strictly complied with the Alien Registration Laws of the French Republic, so that within two hours after the arrival in Paris of the American gentleman, representing the Department of Justice in Washington, I *had* been located.

"Well," said the gentleman from America, "now we know also where you can be located."

I left, and after doing a few errands, returned to my hotel. There I found that some men from the Sûreté Générale had visited my room while the American, another of their representatives, and I were chatting over our cocktails in the Crillon. They had seized all sorts of documents in my possession, including one letter sent to me *to Paris* from the Auswärtige Amt, bearing the *same date* as the statement to the Mixed Claims Commission to the effect that I could not be located!

I immediately drew the attention of Herr de Haas to this veritable catastrophe—and its possible consequences. I inquired further how the Auswärtige Amt reconciled their declaration "Rintelen cannot be located" with their undertaking to be "in honour bound."

The duplicity revealed by this incident was bad enough, and humiliating in the extreme. But almost more disheartening, to a patriot like myself, were the disunity of purpose, the absence of co-operation, the haphazard, opportunist, inefficient, short-sighted and oscillating policy which were apparently the only things to be expected from post-war Germany.

These may seem strong words at this stage of the dispute. But if the reader will persevere, he will find that they are justified. The seizure of those papers by the Sûreté Générale was to play a part three years later; the incident was characteristically falsified by that party in the

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Foreign Office which Herr Hossenfelder so ably championed, and was, as usual, closed by a letter from Admiral Hall.

I will return to it, in 1931.

* * * * *

Shortly after this, I received another telephone message, as unexpected as the last :

" This is Admiral Hall speaking. Would you care to come and dine with me—at Prunier's? "

No answer was necessary; I met my host and found he had ordered *Langouste à l'Americaine.*

" I advise you to have the same," he said.

" I should love to; but why do you say that? "

" Have you heard from America of late? "

" As a matter of fact, I have," I replied, smiling to myself as I remembered my visit to the Hôtel Crillon.

" H'm." A pause.

" Is this why you suggested ' Langouste à l'Americaine ' ? "

" Not quite." Another pause. Then Admiral Hall said suddenly:

" Are you aware that the American sabotage case is beginning to revolve solely round your person? "

I looked, and felt surprised.

" Look here," he continued, " if you care to come and see me to-morrow at my hotel, I will show you a lot of things which will surprise you."

" Indeed? "

" Yes, I should think so. Berlin is once more denying the ' 1915 mission,' and denying you were ever ' sent ' to America."

" That does not surprise me in the least. What have you to show me, Sir? "

" I was given authority to show you a few intercepted war-time messages."

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"Oh!"

"Have a look at these," for meantime we had arrived at coffee, and the table had been cleared.

"Have you got some others, by any chance?"

"Plenty! That's what I've come for. Watch your step, my dear fellow, before *you* make any statement."

"Statements? Yes; Mr. Battle has already sent me some. He's a true friend."

"Well, I wish to be a true friend too; you can count upon me as you can count upon Mr. Battle."

What an *enemy*!

With a sigh, I poured out some more Anjou; by this time we were at bottle number three:—If ever you are in France, stick to Anjou, once you've embarked on it; it is as quiet as water. But don't top off with champagne and liqueur.

"I am fortifying myself for to-morrow, Sir."

"I'm afraid you'll be needing it."

* * * * *

Grateful though I was to Admiral Hall, I loathed the idea of being thus enlightened by a former *foe* as to "statements" concerning me made by *friends*—Herr von Papen, Graf Bernstorff, and others.

Here is one small extract of what he showed me. It related to Papen, the former Military Attaché in Washington, who had stated under oath before a magistrate at Dülmen in Westphalia, on November 27, 1927:

> "My personal opinion was that such acts of force against the property of citizens of the United States, a country with which we were then living at peace, would constitute an extremely flagrant violation of that country's neutrality, and should not under any circumstances be countenanced, supported, or furthered

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in any way. The Ambassador very decidedly took up the same position. . . .

"I have not, by word or deed, lent my support to, or furthered any projects aiming at such destruction. . . .

"The instructions of the General Staff to the Military Attaché, the subject of which was sabotage against factories, incitements to strikes, incendiary activities, etc., I myself never received."

On November 25, 1927, at Starnberg in Bavaria, Herr Graf Bernstorff declared upon oath that this order had never been submitted to him, but was forwarded by his office direct to the Military Attaché!

A small matter: warfare on neutral territory, that is all!

These instructions had been shown to me in Berlin, before my departure for America in March 1915; their object was to assure me the full collaboration which I had the right to expect from the Military Attaché!

Here is the telegram in full:

III b. Pol. 205 *Berlin, NW, Molkte-Stasse 8.*
24th January, 1915.

Secret.

To the Auswärtige Amt.

With reference to message of 23rd inst:

It is requested that the following telegram be forwarded in code to the Imperial Embassy in Washington:

For the Military Attaché:

For sabotage in the United States and Canada the names of suitable people are to be learnt from the following persons:

1. F . . . 2. O' . . . 3. G . . .

1 and 2 absolutely reliable and discreet.

3 reliable, not always discreet.

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AMBASSADOR BERNSTORFF

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The persons have been indicated through Sir Roger Casement.

In the United States, sabotage may cover all kinds of factories . . . for delivery of war-materials. Railways, dams, bridges, however, must not be touched.

Under no circumstances must the Embassy be compromised; same applies to Irish-German Propaganda.

By order of the General Staff.

(*Signed*) ZIMMERMANN.

Entry—Journal
Auswärtiges Amt
F. No. 3196
Sgd. Graf Montgelas

This telegraphic order, forwarded via Stockholm, and promptly intercepted by the British Admiralty, had been put in evidence against me in my trials *ten years ago!* And yet, with the full knowledge of this fact, some Foreign Office jurists made Papen and Bernstorff sign "sworn statements" for which the penal codes of all civilized countries have but one name. . .

Herr Graf Bernstorff had stretched his meaning of the word "oath" to include the "emphatic" statement that not one case of sabotage committed against property on the territory of the United States during the period of neutrality had ever come to his knowledge; "the instructions of the General Staff to the Military Attaché, the subject of which was sabotage against factories, incitements to strikes, incendiary activities, etc., I myself never received."

Strange, most strange. . . .

Did not Graf Bernstorff express before the Reichstag Committee in 1921 his regret that I should have had to pay so heavy a penalty for the sabotage acts committed, which were brought out in the course of my three public trials in

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America in 1917 and 1918? The only decent words that had come from his lips on that occasion.

Herr Hauptmann Papen, in his eagerness to reveal the truth, does not, naturally, omit to reproduce, attached to his Dülmen statement, a report to Berlin made by him on May 3, 1915, to the effect that England was then buying arms in Brazil, with the Portuguese Government acting as intermediary, to the value of £8,000,000, which amount included about £300,000 for bribing officials there, such as Ministers, Heads of Departments; the negotiations were conducted by the Brazilian Ministry of Finance and by Lord Rothschild, so he stated.

But why dip further into the thirty-nine pages sworn to by Papen, and finished off with the assertion: "I have withheld nothing"?

And why dip further into the twenty-six pages sworn to by Graf Bernstorff, in which he states: "I have not concealed anything"?

Had he not remembered that in 1921, when things were still a bit fresher in his memory, he admitted to the Reichstag Committee by his silence his full knowledge of all the details of the acts of sabotage in America?

What was I to think, too, of Herr Hossenfelder's sworn declaration: "Rintelen told me, during an interview in 1926, that he never caused any damage on American territory"? So he had declared on March 27th, 1929.

In point of fact, I had explained to Herr Hossenfelder, during that memorable interview, that in 1915 I had declared that I would be on safer ground if I confined my sabotage to the destruction of munitions bought and paid for by the *Allies*, because, in that case, I was not damaging *American*—that is to say, neutral—*property*.

Is a legal adviser of the Auswärtige Amt ignorant of the distinction between property and territory?

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"But why deny, deny, deny all the time?" I exclaimed. "It is all so obvious, and so well known!" If, during the War, such a mission must be disavowed—well and good; everyone will understand, even appreciate; but after the War, when once one has come to an understanding with a former enemy, and is "in honour bound"?

For it was certainly not because the Auswärtige Amt was afraid *I* was in danger of having to pay a heavy price for my mischief-making in America, that, as early as January 1917, when I was still safe and sound as a prisoner-of-war in Donington Hall, they anxiously inquired of the Embassy in Washington whether the Embassy too had heard rumours of my impending surrender to the Americans. . . . Berlin (see Auswärtige Amt despatch No. 175) seemed to have foreseen the consequences of the surrender. A public trial would be impossible to avert, and the Imperial Government would thereby be implicated and compromised. . . .

Graf Bernstorff in his reply (see Embassy's despatch No. 35) gauged the situation correctly when he replied:

"These fears seem justified: Rintelen must be removed."

"Removed"? How did His Excellency think a prisoner-of-war on British territory could be "removed", by the *enemy*, from an internment camp such as Donington Hall?

Did his fearful imagination transport him then, in January 1917, into the midst of the Reichstag Investigation Committee's meeting in June 1921, and make him hear the questions so mercilessly asked of him by the ghost of that same Rintelen whom it would have been so prudent to "remove"? . . .

* * * * *

I was completely dumbfounded.

I told the Admiral that I needed to recover from the shock. I wanted to go to the country for a few days.

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A feeling of sadness filled me:

That is my country, my Germany! To such depths has it fallen! How could she ever recover her proud position if such meanness prevailed there now!

For days and days I roamed through the woods around Versailles, trying to escape from it all.

I drifted back, goaded by hunger, to the little crêmerie near the Petit Trianon. . . .

By chance, the keeper of the *Ecuries* passed under the window as I was sipping my coffee and cream.

I wanted to forget, I was anxious to release my mind.

What better could I do than go back centuries into the past?

The sparkling keeper, with his imaginative eloquence, had me quickly diverted. . . .

Who could remain indifferent to the charm of Marie Antoinette's *carosse*, to the pathos of the state-carriage which was destined for the Duc de Chambord—the Henri V, who never reigned?

Prussian guns before the walls of Paris had, in 1815, rudely shattered the hopes of the Bourbons, too, who had clung so desperately to their hope of once again rescuing France from a Bonaparte's rule. Napoleon III, too, had lost his throne, together with his army, at Sédan. Surely, France would welcome back her *King*. . . .

From the *Ecuries* I drifted into the Palace, wandering listlessly from hall to hall. Dusk was falling, when a polite *gardien* whispered to me: "The Salle des Miroirs is just closing, monsieur."

La Salle des Miroirs. . . . Without realising it, I had been standing for some time in the Hall of Mirrors, which had witnessed the *Kaiser-Proklamation* in 1871 and "Versailles. . . ."

"The Old Emperor, Bismarck, Moltke, Roon. . . . Those were men, gentlemen, soldiers, officers,—true-born."

* * * * *

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But back to Paris, to present-day history!

Needless to say, a thorough study of the various documents —statements, intercepted messages, and the like—hardened me in my firm decision that there should be no compromise between honour and dishonour.

I am not given to declaring in writing that I hold myself "in honour bound," and then binding myself to dishonour and lies.

* * * * *

In July, three men came to Paris, each on an errand of his own, yet each desiring to see me again. On three consecutive days, three telegrams.

The first was from Admiral Albert P. Niblack, of the American Navy, who was now head of the International Hydrographic Bureau in Monaco. He had just returned from America, had a lot to confide to me, and—warned me that I should beware of Berlin.

Niblack had been my sincere friend ever since he had been Naval Attaché in Berlin, a friend even during the War, trying to help where he could, and a friend now, when he learned that there was trouble brewing for me.

The second telegram came from Mr. George Gordon Battle—friendship, kindness, and loyalty incarnate. At first I felt terribly embarrassed: all my endeavours to ensure that this devoted defender receive at least outwardly the recognition his splendid conduct had merited, that this odious fee-matter be once and for all disposed of, had so far failed.

How out of place my embarrassment was! I had underestimated the fine qualities of this true friend.

"Not a word about this, my dear Rintelen; and, mind you, never a single cent from you personally. It's your Government that is responsible for this thing. . . .

"How's your daughter? Tell her that I am a friend of

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hers too. Now come along; step into my car and let's drive out to the Bois de Boulogne, you know the Restaurant de la Terrasse? It's stifling in Paris!"

On the terrasse I was to learn something!

"It is incredible what people can do, how they can spoil their chances! I wish Herr de Haas were here: he would see how tragically right he was. And yet," I added with a sigh, "even he, for all his conviction, was unable to get his view accepted."

But strangest and most unexpected of the three visitors who were anxious to shake hands with me was Mr. John C. Knox, the Public Prosecutor during my trial in America, now a Judge of the United States.

Ten years ago how he had thundered at my misdeeds! But not once did he attack me personally:

"The Government has not an unkind word to say about him; he is an officer, and did his duty, as he saw it. But I say that he is guilty in this case, and ought to be convicted. . . . Have you heard the Government say anything unkind about him? I have more respect for him than for the bunch that took to its heels . . . and made off to Germany under diplomatic cover. . . . We want him to have a fair trial, but I claim he is guilty in this case. . . ."

Here, in Paris, Judge Knox suddenly sprang this question upon me:

"Tell me, Captain. Would you ever commit perjury?"

"Perjury? How do you mean?"

"Well, I have got on my desk quite a stack of affidavits of all kinds—well, you know—h'm—there are those sabotage cases; well, I had a lot to do with these during the War. Well, as a matter of routine, it was all referred to me. . . . I don't know, but on the face of it, I guess it's not all O.K. In other words, I'm afraid they've rather twisted things."

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"What things?"

"Oh—er—all those things that happened during the War: the things we two had our little difference about in '17, the time you got a bit excited in my office."

"Oh, you mean, Judge, the sworn statements by those fellows in Berlin?"

"Yes. Listen here. *Would* you commit perjury?"

"Yes! Oh, yes!"

For a moment he looked disappointed.

"Well, we had an idea that you might, out of patriotism, just go a bit out of your way. . . ."

"No, sir; I think I have gone pretty far 'out of my way' for the sake of patriotism. But perjury for the sake of patriotism—no! Oh, no!"

"Well, you've left such a good name behind you in America; we had to sentence you, but we all had the greatest respect for you. Why should you spoil that reputation now?"

"Oh, no! There you misunderstand me completely. Perjury? Yes! But not for my country!"

"Well, d—— it all, *what* for, then?"

"What for? Why, if a lady's reputation is at stake!"

To this day I can see His Honour's eyes, as I read in them how, for a fraction of a second, the judge and the man in his soul fought against one another. The judge unmistakably won; but before a sour expression could cloud his features, I quickly interposed:—

"Well, if any of those fellows in Berlin knew what four years' hard labour means, even *they* wouldn't commit perjury; they wouldn't have the guts!"

"Well, I'm glad to hear that's how you feel about it."

* * * * *

Somehow, this conversation in Paris reached the ears of

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Admiral Hall in London. He had been asked by the American authorities what weight he attached to my testimony as against that of the "gang" in Berlin; and when my views on perjury were reported, he exclaimed:—

"That's just the way I'd size up Rintelen!"

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CHAPTER XI

1929

A DREARY winter in Paris, still negotiating with the *Ministère de la Marine* over British motors.

The monotony of routine and red-tape had its happy interludes: Berlin supplied them—free of charge.

The "decency school," directed by Herr de Haas, was fighting a losing game. Many a kind letter came from him, and I felt really sorry over the situation in which he found himself, trying to uphold Germany's good name, and for that purpose having to use all kinds of subterfuges!

Over and over again I had to reassure him that the confidential letters which he sent me about his struggle against the "no compromise" school would be promptly burned. And great though the temptation was to keep them, Herr de Haas was such a fine character, and had proved such a staunch friend, that I resisted the temptation.

One letter, however, he gladly permitted me to keep. It was written by him to counter the covert misrepresentations emanating from the "moon-and-sixpence" school at the Auswärtige Amt, and it ran as follows:

> "The whole question of your alleged interference in the sabotage case has been settled to the complete satisfaction of the Auswärtige Amt."

News from Germany reached me that the *Polizei-Kommissare* too, who were supposed to be making "investigations" as to my whereabouts, had had a good laugh over

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the comic-opera proceedings ordered for the purpose of make-believe in America.

"As if the Reich could be compromised," I wrote to Berlin, "when the whole of America has known ever since 1917 that acts of sabotage *were* committed. . . .

"On the contrary, not to wind up the whole affair once and for all, is the one way to compromise Germany's reputation still further."

* * * * *

What a delightful relaxation was brought me by the spring of 1929, in the form of a visit from my daughter to Paris! After all, a struggle, such as that I had been ceaselessly waging over these war-time affairs, is apt to harrow even the strongest mind.

It was her first contact with France, with Paris, and all the beauty in Parisian May:—*un vrai paradis pour une jeune fille*!

I was relentlessly and mercilessly hounded about from Versailles to Vincennes, from the "Sacré Cœur" to the Champ-de-Mars, from the Louvre to the Musée de Cluny—and from the other "Louvre" to the *bouguinistes* on the quays—from Prunier's for luncheon to the "*Cheval Pie*" for dinner, from the Casino de Paris to the Comédie Française:—no respite was granted me. And when I was half-dead, in the small hours of the morning, I had to let myself be brought back to life—and what life!—by the melodious rhythms of the latest tango.

In short, *zwei Herzen im drei-viertel Takt.*

What a father! Could he deliver back to her mother a young girl who had just been living a week of day-and-night life in Paris? I did not dare do so, till I had first rested and restored her.

So off with her to the châlet in Dieppe. The sea-breeze was sure to do her a lot of good, after Paris. . . .

* * * * *

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My daughter's vacation having come to an end, there had to be a parting of the ways—hers via Cologne to Berlin, while I decided to stay on in Dieppe.

The châlet had, by this time, become almost proverbial for its jollity and its charm; and no sooner had the bright young things in Germany exchanged impressions, than one after the other, chaperoned by their mothers, they left their homes for mine.

* * * * *

The summer holidays over, and the ritual correspondence with the Wilhelmstrasse duly attended to—of course, only after my lady guests had departed—trunks were packed, and, bag and baggage, I returned to Paris. It was on October the 1st.

When our train stopped at Pontoise, the compartment became crowded:—Exposition . . . *Grand Palais, sans doute!*

My fellow-passengers proved more polite than words can say. They asked about the window, about smoking, whether they might move my coat, would I care to read the paper, and finally, when we arrived at the Gare Saint Lazare, insisted on helping me with my luggage. Courteous people, these French.

With the same courtesy, a second after I had put my ticket in the hands of the collector, a well-dressed man came up to me out of the crowd:

"*Monsieur le Capitaine von Rintelen?*"

"*Oui.*"

"*Vous voudrez bien me suivre?*"

"*Vous suivre?*"

"*Oui.*"

"*Mais où ça?*"

"*Au Ministère de l'Intérieur.*"

"*Dans quel but?*"

"*Un interrogatoire à la Sûreté Générale.*"

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"*Quoi? De quoi s'agit-il donc?*"

"*Monsieur, on vous donnera toutes les explications là-bas.*"

No sooner had he hailed a taxi, than we were joined by the two courteous gentlemen from Pontoise, who were *not* going to the Grand Palais, after all.

"This seems to be something serious. . . . Three men round me. . . ."

I was ushered into the office of an *Inspecteur-en-Chef*, and at once a long document was read out to me, a charge of "*espionnage et espionnage commercial contre la République Française*," and in favour of Germany and—Great Britain!

"*Espionnage?* . . . In connection with a British officer . . . residing at a large hotel in Park Lane, London? Well, I'm . . ."

The walls of the hotel were scarcely dry. To think that already a plot should be hatched within its damp rooms—and against France!

Every letter I had in my trunks was carefully sifted—and, of course, not an iota of "incriminating" matter was found.

"You have no other letters anywhere?"

"Certainly not!"

"Where do you receive your mail?"

"At a bank, Place Vendôme."

"Nowhere else?"

"Nowhere else."

"Well, we've made a search there already, and have found the most incriminating documents."

"Utterly impossible—or else, forgeries."

"*Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire, ça?*"

"Well, I tell you, there is nothing implicating me there."

"But your whole private box is full of papers from that British agent."

"If you have found a single piece there which comes from

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a source that I am not acquainted with personally, then, you won't mind my saying in plain language: such supposed incriminating evidence has been—planted there!"

"What do you mean to suggest?"

"Would it be possible that even the Sûreté Générale has fallen victim to a trick?"

"*Im*possible!"

"Don't dismiss anything in this world as impossible. . . . After all, any other conclusion would not be flattering to the successors of Joseph Fouché."

"But if we confront you with witnesses?"

"Please, by all means; I am wondering who they can be."

"Do you know, by any chance, the Princess O——?"

"Yes; I made the acquaintance of her late husband when he was a high official of the Russian Imperial Government. I consider it was an honour for me to be introduced to him."

"So you would call her a friend?"

"Not a *friend*; a casual acquaintance, made—shall I say?—socially."

"Would you trust her?"

"I have no definite reason for not trusting her."

"That's interesting."

"How so?"

"You have just said you knew her; well, she has supplied us with evidence against you."

"Rather surprising, I would call that, because I was the incarnation of courtesy towards her. I even helped her, because, like so many other Russian *émigrés*, she seemed to be in some straits."

"You helped her financially?"

"No, sir; never a single penny, unless you consider *une tasse de chocolat* offered to an elderly lady *chez* '*La Marquise de Sevigné*' financial help."

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"Don't try to ridicule this affair, please."

"Nothing of the sort; I am as serious as possible; I see a serious case which might arise; and the more serious a situation is, in my life, the more ironical I become."

"Huh!"

"Huh? You don't seem to know that I am not quite a child in this kind of affair. I think that at a time when you were still in school I had been at your job for some years. But I handled it in a very different fashion."

"Indeed?"

"Well, I'll tell you about that later on—when I've seen more of your work. I am very much interested in that; maybe I shall learn something new."

"Very well, then; we shall proceed," the *inspecteur* replied, with visible surprise.

"Yes, do let's proceed; let *me* meet your witnesses. Because the evidence—on that we are agreed, aren't we?—is pure fabrication. And I'm sorry you've been misled. For you may rest assured, *Monsieur l'Inspecteur*, that this is a deliberate trick to embroil us, and to discredit your famous organisation."

The inspecteur growled at me:

"That's what you think it is. Well, you'll soon see."

"Yes; I think I shall soon see: I'm quite positive that someone *is* trying to mislead you, *croyez moi*. . . . Now for your witnesses! Where are they?"

"You'll meet them to-morrow."

"To-morrow?"

"Yes, you will stay in the prison over-night. It is too late now."

I was not exactly delighted; but, after four years "hard" in America, during the War, why not a bit of peace-time experience, in France, for a change?

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Well escorted, I was marched off, and carefully searched, whether for weapons, cocaine, or strychnine, I do not know. At any rate, they found nothing but a man's habitual implements: cigarette-case, watch,—but not so much as a pocket-knife.

So I found myself soon afterwards on a wooden bench—nothing new to me—and, thanks to the effort and strain of a day of exciting adventure at the Sûreté Générale, I fell sound asleep:

"*Ein gut Gewissen*
Ist ein sanftes Ruhekissen."

A conscience clear
Is a head-rest dear.

* * * * *

The *policiers* know how to make good breakfast coffee. I heartily accepted their offer to join in, and within a few minutes we were discussing their War memories, from the Somme and the Aisne to the Rhine and the Ruhr.

The atmosphere changed slightly when an *Inspecteur de la Sûreté Générale* appeared on the scene. With due respect I submitted the humble request that I be allowed to have a shave—as the proper beginning of what seemed likely to be another day of business.

"A shave? Only after you have made your confession."

"I am afraid, then, I shall have to leave this place *en poilu*."

A wry smile came over his face, in answer to this manifestation of my unshakeable good-humour.

The day turned out full of excitement, but the excitement was theirs alone, because the deeper they went into the ramifications of the supposed dark plot between "*un agent allemand*" and "*un agent britannique*," the more I recognised

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that this was nothing but a grotesque trap, which my would-be executioners had allowed themselves to be led into by some sinister gang.

All too many elements in Paris, in particular foreign ones, are in the habit of earning their bread and butter by incessant chasing after any kind of reward that may come their way.

Hours were spent in nothing but waiting for witnesses to turn up.

"Do you know Mme. X——?"

"Never heard of her in my life."

"Do you know Mademoiselle Y——?"

"I once saw her name in a paper as being mixed up in some odd affair—I don't even remember what."

"Yes, but she lived in London before."

"Am I supposed to know all, or even any, odd Mademoiselle who happens to have lived in London before? *Pour qui me prenez-vous?*"

"But that English officer has been over here so many times?"

"Hallucinations!"

"Yur——!" Out of a far corner of the room came an angry bellow, from someone sitting behind a pile of documents at a shaky table. . . .

"*Maintenant, Messieurs, j'en ai assez!* By to-night, I want to see your witnesses, or I must lodge a complaint."

"*Hein!* You will stay here over-night, where you belong, and you will wait till *we* confront you with our witnesses. Then you'll be surprised."

"I shall, I'm sure!"

"Do you know Monsieur le Notaire Z——? or rather ex-Notaire," he quickly corrected himself.

My suspicions were immediately aroused by this correction.

"*Jamais de ma vie. . . ex-Notaire . . .?*"

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"But you signed your contract with the British officer before him."

"My contract? . . . Let me give you another bit of inside information: plots are not drawn up in contract form, or before a notary public."

I sighed loudly, but inwardly I could not help laughing.

In the afternoon, at long last, the famous notary Z—— appeared.

A fearfully self-important personage, he walked pompously over to an armchair; and I observed that his frock-coat showed all the marks of having outlived its natural term, though a monocle and spats were there, trying to give the lie to any such impression. . . . In a way, he reminded me of *The Dark Invader's* New York advocate, Boniface.

"Do you know this gentleman?" I was asked.

"I've never had the pleasure, I'm sure."

"What?" exclaimed the inspecteur.

And upon this the be-spatted gentleman rose with deliberation from his chair.

"*Mais, monsieur* . . . you were in my office last winter—to sign a contract."

"I was in your office?"

"Yes."

"As sure as the Eiffel Tower stands four square in the Champ-de-Mars I have never set eyes upon this gentleman."

"*Menteur! Menteur!*" howled the inspecteur.

"*Une fois de plus le mot 'menteur,' et je vous casserai la gueule!*" ("Once more the word liar, and I'll break your jaw.")

Pretty strong language, at the Sûreté Générale, for one who is surrounded by half-a-dozen inspecteurs, but even my good-humour has its limits.

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Whereat *Monsieur l'ex-Notaire* made his exit. . . . Possibly he feared for his denture.

Later in the evening two females made their appearance. *Mademoiselle* did not fail to nod her "*Oui*" to any questions put to her, though she seemed to be terrified whenever I looked her in the eyes.

I recognised her as a sorting-clerk at the Customers' Mail Department of a bank, Place Vendôme, where I used to call for my letters.

Had she been blackmailed by some one into stating such nonsense? I felt almost sorry for her when she walked out.

Finally, *Madame la Princesse O*—— was ushered in. I had not doubted for a moment, knowing as I did what station in life her husband had held in Imperial times, that she would remember the *tasse de chocolat* and my impeccable correctitude towards her. But what was happening now?

The inspecteur read out to her the whole deposition Mademoiselle had just been nodding her assent to, and the Princess, after the hasty reply: "*Cela est exact!*", and without daring so much as to glance at me, dashed out again.

That was then, after all, the "confrontation" I had been so anxiously looking forward to for two days!

* * * * *

The great night, the grand *interrogatoire*, came at last. The scene was set: half-a-dozen inspecteurs around me, some taking notes, some questioning me from the right or the left.

The prisoner too was in good fettle; for he had had nothing to eat for hours on end. . . . "I've gone through worse than this. So let's get it done, anyhow."

"*Vous n'avez rien à avouer?*"

"*Non, rien.*"

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" Well, that makes things all the worse for you."

I shrugged my shoulders:

" Won't you please tell me what the whole thing is about, after all? "

Question after question: about every move in my life, every call paid or received, every journey. . . .

" It's surprising you should have been travelling so much."

" Well, in the first place, I like travelling; in the second place, I have relatives and friends in a good many countries."

" What were you doing in Italy? "

" I visited my sister who is married there. She lives in Sicily."

" No, you stayed in Florence! "

" That's where I met my daughter, who was arriving by the Brenner Line."

" On what date? "

" You have my passport in your hands."

" Don't you remember the date? "

" Of course; I'll repeat to you each and every date of entry and exit to and from all the countries I've visited during the last five years, since I left Germany for England. If you want me to, I'll give you even the hour, the train, and describe to you the looks of the customs and passport officials,—and give you the number of the taxi-cab that brought me here! "

" *Comment ça ?* "

" Just a habit of mine—to remember taxi-cab numbers. . . . Often useful! "

" *Bien;* but now about the ex-Notaire Z——; you do admit you went to his office."

" *Non !* "

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"*Si!*"

"*Non!*"

"*Si.*"

"*Non.*"

This game of "*Si*" and "*Non*" went on for some time. . . . It was played again when Madame X—— and Mademoiselle Y—— and my supposed "close contact" with them came up for discussion; such "close contact," of course, there had never existed.

No result so far. So some other turn had to be followed up.

"Did you ever stay in the Dom-Hotel in Cologne?"

"Yes; quite some time. How do you know?"

"*Ha! ha! Vous voyez!* Didn't you have a meeting at the Dom-Hotel in Cologne with Admiral von Reuter?"

"*Non!*"

"*Si!*"

"*Non!*"

"*Si!*"

"All right! If you think so: I can't help it. But you are mistaken. I know that Herr von Reuter was the splendid German Admiral-in-Command who scuttled the German Fleet in Scapa Flow; but I've never had the honour of making his personal acquaintance."

"So you deny that too? Let's come to somebody else. Do you know Colonel Bauer."

"No; I'm sorry."

"You deny that too?"

"I'm not denying. I don't know him."

"But you have met him at the Café B—— Boulevard des Italiens?"

"I have never in all my visits to Paris taken so much as one cup of coffee in the Boulevard des Italiens. I never go there; I dislike it."

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"You were seen there only this summer, with Colonel Bauer."

"This summer? 1929? No mistake?"

"No; no mistake.

"*Alors on va me confronter avec un cadavre!*—because, I may tell you that Colonel Bauer was drowned in spring 1929, in China in the Yang-Tse River. He was Ludendorff's right-hand man during the War, and was then in the service of the Nanking Government as military adviser to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek; and by an accident he lost his life. . . . The late Joseph Fouché would turn in his grave if he knew how poorly his successors keep themselves informed. . . ."

The inspecteurs looked at one another, considerably put out. I went on, heedless:

"Now really, make an end of all this. It can lead nowhere."

"*Aha! Vous verrez sous peu!*"

"All right; what am I going to see?"

"Now things are getting very serious. Won't you take an advocate?"

"*Non; je serai mon propre avocat! De quoi s'agit-il maintenant?*"

"You see this dossier here?"

"Yes; what does it contain?"

"All the men you have met . . . especially the photograph of that British officer in Grosvenor House, and of another man you know very well."

"Please show them to me. Come one, come all! Whatever information I can give you about them, I shall gladly supply."

The inspecteurs evidently did not realise, even at this stage, that I was not a newcomer to this kind of

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business. Apparently they had something particular up their sleeve.

I was shown a mass of photographs, and invariably my reply came: "Never seen him."

Then, all of a sudden, right under my nose, a photograph I *did* recognise: "Yes, I know her."

"What do you say to that?"

"What is there to say? May I not go into a restaurant in Paris and sup with a well-known American lady?"

"Really, just a social gathering? Is *she* not"—and here I observed a victorious smile on the inspecteur's face—"is she really not in touch with that British officer in Grosvenor House in London?"

"Most positively not; she is in America now—at least, I had a letter from her two or three weeks ago: *Pas d'histoires ici, vous comprenez?*"

If they were to "attack" my lady friend, they were to meet the wrong man!

At this moment the inspecteur picked up an envelope and presented me with the crest on its flap:—"Grosvenor House!"

"Can you read? *Gross-vey-norr 'ouse!!*"

What is that? Is it a trap? I wondered. What a coincidence! Who could have written to me from Grosvenor House, in London?

I requested the officer to turn the envelope round.

A coincidence indeed! Unbelievable! But, after all, Grosvenor House is a big hotel. The writing was that of a lady friend, the wife of a well-known American banker, with whom I had been on good terms for many years, whose husband had never failed to look me up when they came to Europe, and whose charming habit it was to address me always as "my dear and gallant Captain,"—the lady, in fact, whose photograph I had just been shown.

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Such lengths had they gone to at the Súreté Générale in order to unearth the alleged "plot," that someone had been sent over to London to take a snapshot of my American friend and her husband. Now I was looking at her handwriting, and on the envelope was the post-mark clearly indicating she must have arrived barely a week before, and quite unexpectedly, for in that last letter of hers, which I received some three weeks previously, she had indicated that they intended to stay that winter in America.

Coincidence, coincidence, what tricks it can play one!

Once more the inspecteur reminded me, severely, with a finger pointed menacingly towards me: "*C'est votre dernière minute pour faire un aveu!*"

"*Rien à avouer, mon inspecteur!* And now please open the letter and read it out to me; but I can tell you beforehand the signature, and how the writer addresses me."

There it was: "My dear and gallant Captain."

"*Rien à avouer!*"

So this too had fallen flat. What next?

It was, by now, past midnight, and I asked whether I could have something to eat.

"No; not before you have made *votre aveu.*"

"All right, let's go on, then. I can stand a lot!"

A renewed fumbling with photographs, and this time the inspecteur committed a slip: he inadvertently turned up one photograph, and as quickly as possible turned it over again. But not so quickly that I had not been able to recognise the moustached face on it—the late Emile V. Gaché, the Dark Invader of 1915.

My brain raced. . . . Fifteen years after? . . . How could the Sûreté Générale have come into possession of this photograph *now*?

I thought it was my turn to pull their legs, after they had

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refused me food and drink, evidently with the idea that that would at long last " break " me.

" Are you asking me who that is? Well, he's dead. He died a long time ago."

" Dead? "

" Dead."

" *Non !* "

" *Si !* "

" *Non !* "

" *Si !* "

" *Non !* "

" He *is* dead. And what's more, I know where he is buried."

" Where is he buried? "

" In Scotland Yard; August 1915."

" H'm, so you won't admit that you travelled under a false name? "

" I never did, except in war-time, when a good many men on duty had to do the same. But, I repeat, never before, and never since."

" You have never come to France on such a passport and with that photograph? "

" Never. It was taken away from me by the British Admiralty during the War, and I shall at once make inquiries in London as to how it has become possible that that photograph should now be in your possession. It was not supposed to leave England once I had been taken prisoner in 1915. Someone must have blundered, or been the victim of . . . well, I'd better not say what I think. . . ."

By this time they seemed to have definitely satisfied themselves that there had indeed been a " plot " of some kind or other, but, as honest men, they realised that they must have got hold of the wrong person.

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But as a crowning effort, and in the hope of presenting their superiors with something, at least, they made the never-to-be-forgotten appeal:—

"*Faites donc un tout petit aveu!*"

"Nothing doing; there is nothing to 'confess.'"

It was time to finish; I stood up:

"Messieurs, I am leaving the Sûreté Générale with my honour as unchallengeable as when I entered. Therefore—no confession, no concession of any kind, no matter for whose benefit."

* * * * *

The next two hours were exclusively devoted to chat, over some *tartines*, about my war-time experiences; all that had been under discussion was completely forgotten; they had given me up as a bad job!

Most of the inspecteurs had seen service during the War, had done their bit for their country, and from minute to minute their amazement grew.

No one has more interest in or more respect for his fellow-creature than the man who has been fighting him.

By now it was about five o'clock in the morning. I insisted upon having a hearty breakfast, and the inspecteurs agreed that I was now entitled to my "*ba-co-na-neggs*."

They joined me in a near-by restaurant, and very decent fellows they proved to be.

Ça, c'est la Sûreté Générale!

* * * * *

I was a free man again.

However, to my chagrin, I found that a number of journalists had been hanging round the Sûreté Générale, and they of course had to do their duty by their papers. Fortunately, by this time, it was too late for the morning editions. But the harm was done; so I had at once to get

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busy with the Press,—and the Press in Paris is a ticklish thing to handle; Fleet Street is quite a different world.

But where was I to turn for guidance?

There was no doubt that the Sûreté Générale could *not* help. Confusion reigned within their own four walls. The "plot" was now an established fact, but the man they had pitched on as the arch-villain was proved to be of complete integrity. Their whole plan of action had come down with a crash!

Agents had to be despatched hither and thither to unravel the threads, and to follow entirely new tracks. Whatever their goodwill towards me, none of the inspecteurs was now available.

Then I had an idea, and my expectations were not deceived. British fair-mindedness can be relied upon.

It was the Paris office of a great London newspaper that helped me out of my plight, and from that office my first contact with the Paris Press was established.

To make a long story short, not one word of the affair leaked out through the evening papers, and the morning editions were kind enough to refer to me simply as "*Le Capitaine R. . . .*"

What more could I ask for?

Although no solution of the riddle had been found during the long all-night *interrogatoire*—at least so far as concerned my alleged complicity in the "plot"—the dossier had, in the course of the days preceding this unforgettable sitting, begun its upward journey, and been put into the hands of a *Juge d'Instruction*—an examining magistrate—for him to make a close study of the case and prepare it for the *Parquet* of the competent court, the Investigating Tribunal.

For although the investigations carried out by the Sûreté

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Générale had clearly revealed that no one was less connected than I with a plot which, beyond any doubt, had really been hatched, and whose ramifications, also beyond any doubt, reached far beyond the frontiers of France, the French authorities did not mean to let the matter drop.

Where the responsibility actually lay was not for me to find out. But one thing I made quite plain to the French authorities: they were also on the wrong track, and indeed very much so, if they thought that a cousin of mine, Dr. von Rintelen, who had been until recently attached to the German Embassy in Paris, owed his recall to a participation in this unpleasant business, about which, they declared, the Embassy *knew*.

Herr Hoesch, the German Ambassador in Paris, was, of course, not heard from. . . .

I was at pains to obtain a statement from the Auswärtige Amt in Berlin substantiating my repeated declarations at the Sûreté Générale, that no bearer of my name was in any way connected with the affair.

But just as the Embassy in Paris had not moved a finger to help a fellow countryman out of trouble, although I had defended the honour of one of its late members, so too the Auswärtige Amt showed not the slightest keenness in coming forward with a definite assertion that my cousin had been transferred to another Embassy as a matter of routine, and long before the recent "plot" had been initiated.

The weeks went by: not a word from Berlin.

What a situation! The German Embassy had not helped. The Auswärtige Amt had not helped.

But the reader has guessed who did:

It was Admiral Sir Reginald Hall, the late enemy—with lightning speed, too.

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His letter was sent me by air mail:

Lyndhurst, Hants.
October 4, 1929.

MY DEAR RINTELEN,

I have just received your letter and I am horrified that you should find yourself accused of a charge of which I am convinced you are not only innocent but quite incapable of being a party to.

When you were trying to get back to Germany during the War, you adopted a usual war course of travelling under an assumed name, and that assumed name was Gaché. As I interviewed you personally in my office, as Director of Naval Intelligence, I can speak from first-hand knowledge. The German Government and the German Embassy in Washington both testified that your name was Rintelen; this can be proved from official documents. Thus, it can be demonstrated that if your name on the passport, when you entered France, was shown as Rintelen, this was and is your name.

There is evidently some ghastly mistake somewhere, but I am much surprised that your war-time passport should now be in Paris. It was with the records of your case in England.

Meanwhile, such assistance as I can give to help you to clear your good name is at your service, and I am moving in the matter at once.

I am acquainted with the present French Ambassador in England, Monsieur de Fleuriau. If the French authorities will refer to their Ambassador, I shall be only too glad to tell him all I know and use all my interest to prove your innocence.

My wife sends her kind regards!

Yours sincerely,
(*Signed*) W. R. HALL.

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I showed this letter to my friends at the Sûreté Générale. Still they were not entirely satisfied.

But when, twenty-four hours later, this telegram arrived from London:—

"*Donne toutes garanties sur personne en question. Fleuriau*"

the amazement in Paris knew no bounds.

My passport was returned to me immediately, *im-médiate-ment!*

As I left the grey, massive building behind me, and walked a few steps to the Champs Elysées for a breath of fresh air, only three words came to my lips:

"Well done, Hall!"

* * * * *

A few days later I received a polite telephone call at my hotel: would I be good enough to come and see the *Inspecteur-en-Chef* once more?

"Of course."

I was ushered into his private office.

No more wooden benches, no dock, no rail. . . .

Cigarettes, and apéritif.

This looks a bit different, I thought.

"What might be your plans for the near future?"

"I don't know yet, Monsieur l'Inspecteur. This affair has upset quite enough plans for me already. But I have important investigations to make, and on German territory, for that matter. Will you accept my word of honour? I think you will have no reason to regret it. The last shadows of suspicion in your mind must be dissipated."

"All right: accepted!"

"And will you be good enough to accept my word also on behalf of the Juge d'Instruction and the Parquet?"

"Indeed I will."

"*Alors, entendu; au revoir, Monsieur l'Inspecteur. A bientôt.*"

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CHAPTER XII

1930

Auswärtiges Amt. *Berlin, March* 31, 1930.
III A 1028.

"The Foreign Office is unable to take any steps as regards your alleged participation in a campaign against the interests of the French Republic, and must therefore leave it to your discretion what attitude you wish to adopt in the matter."

To this I replied, on April 6, as follows:

"I take due note of the interpretation the Foreign Office gives to Article 112, paragraph II, of the Reich Constitution. I wish to point out, on the other hand, that I myself have considered it my duty to defend all and any German organisations, whether official or unofficial, against the charges brought by the French authorities."

The paragraph referred to lays down that every German citizen is entitled to all aid and protection by the Reich, in any matter involving a foreign Government.

Once again, as so often since 1915, I was to know what it felt like to be left in the lurch, to be "let down" by my own Government. It is an act Berlin practised with the perfection acquired by long experience.

My pride and my joy it has always been to help those who are in difficulties. That gives me, so I think, the most perfect satisfaction in life.

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I therefore appreciated all the more the fact that there should be one man at least who was willing to come to my aid, and it is to the everlasting shame of the Wilhelmstrasse that it should have been a foreigner and an ex-enemy: Admiral Hall!

The policiers and the inspecteurs at the Sûreté Générale had asked me over and over again why my own Government, why the German Embassy in Paris, made no move at all. How could I blame them for becoming more and more suspicious over this inaction, and for arriving finally at the conclusion that Berlin actually *was* implicated?

But no; the Embassy could not be made to see how its behaviour would be construed. It preferred to "lay doggo," and leave the rest to time—and me.

* * * * *

In fact, the Auswärtige Amt seemed to think it had not yet made itself appear suspect enough. For after the affair had blown over—I am anticipating somewhat—I wrote asking them to let me have copies of the correspondence relating to this affair. This the Foreign Office, by letter No. III, A 969, refused to do. This letter of theirs, if I had shown it in Paris, would have made the case against them appear blacker than ever!

My own predicament was none too good, and when Herr von Neurath became Foreign Minister, in June 1932, I reopened the question, pointing out that I did not wish to again run risks over what others might, or might not, have done in France, and pointing out also that the letter from the Foreign Office mentioned above, compromised the German Government very seriously. Surely I was entitled to know the facts of the case, and, with the additional safeguard of copies of some documents in the correspondence, be fully

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equipped for defending myself should I ever again find myself faced with similar complications. . . .

Herr von Neurath realised where our common interests lay, and was good enough to have report and copies duly sent to me.

* * * * *

Fortified by the Auswärtige Amt's "courageous" attitude, at whose back were certain personalities who once again proved they were at any rate not *friends*, I now, early in 1930, had to keep the parole given to the *foe*—to proceed into the latter's territory, straight into the lion's jaw.

Such, at least, my return to Paris was described not only by my relatives and personal friends, but also by several German lawyers, among them the famous Professor Grimm, of Essen, who, with courage equal to his skill, had defended so many fellow countrymen before French military tribunals throughout the period of the Occupation.

All, with one accord, implored me not to run the gauntlet of what was and is considered by them to be the hereditary enemy.

But after what had preceded my departure, the pledging of my word to the Sûreté Générale, to the Juge d'Instruction, and to the Parquet, there could be no alternative.

"No matter what may be the outcome," I declared to my friends, "a man's word is his bond."

Besides, what would the Juge d'Instruction personally have felt and thought about me, a German gentleman and an officer, as he himself expressed it, if I had dodged the issue?

A civil, if not friendly correspondence had been carried on between him, the French citizen, and myself, the German citizen, as if no barriers of race, as if no frontiers existed, as if International Law, foreign States, and the like

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had never been invented. I symbolised in his eyes all that is conveyed by the term "*Outre-Rhin*": I was the sample to be assayed. If I ran away, he was bound to treat it as tantamount to an admission of guilt; but, worse still in my eyes, he was certain to add the comment: "*Voilà bien les Allemands.*"

Well, he was going to see his Allemand!—and convince himself that gentlemen's agreements transcend differences of nationality!

One day in February, at ten o'clock in the morning, as arranged, I presented myself at his private chamber, knocked at the door, and found myself face to face with a man—who could not trust his eyes! It did not require any brilliant powers of observation to see that he had *not* expected me to turn up again!

The battle was half-won already! And when we came to discuss the merits of the case, and gradually drifted into a slightly heated controversy—heated at least as far as my Juge d'Instruction was concerned—I succeeded in creating a peaceful atmosphere by one short sentence. Seated in my comfortable chair opposite the judge's desk, and serenely composed, I simply said:

"*Le fait, en soi-même, que moi, Boche que je suis, me trouve chez vous, Monsieur le Juge, dans votre cabinet, devrait vous convaincre que je n'ai rien à cacher ni à craindre, mon Juge.*"

("The fact that I, Hun that I am, have come, of my own free will, to present myself at your office, should in itself convince you that I have nothing to hide, and nothing to fear.")

The magistrate looked at me for a moment, then gently assented:

"*C'est juste.*"

There followed seven hours of discussion, at times smooth,

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at others a bit animated, in particular when I drew comparisons between experiences of my "past," in New York, during the War, and the reading out of one witness's testimony to another, which had occurred during the past hearing of the case in Paris. It was a procedure which I could not help subjecting to sarcastic comment now that I was confronted with a learned judge.

The seven hours were interrupted by a meal, and, strange to say, both the judge and I had chosen the same restaurant in the vicinity of the Palais de Justice, and the unpremeditated humour of the situation almost tempted me to toast the judge, across the grill-room, with my light *rosé d'Anjou.*

About six o'clock in the evening we parted as friends, shaking one another's hand—and this time without an "*Au revoir.*"

And yet there was a *revoir*, for half an hour later I found, at the post-office indicated by me, *poste restante*, a letter from Admiral Sir Reginald Hall vouching, in the kindest of terms, for the already discharged "culprit." I dashed over to the Palais de Justice, and found my late Juge d'Instruction still bent over the dossier. Such a manifestation of loyalty did not remain without its due of appreciation from the Frenchman:

"*Ils sont étonnants, ces Anglais!*"

Admiral Hall's letter became the last and the culminating page of the dossier: *République Française contre Rintelen.*

* * * * *

The due calls of respects at the Sûreté Générale followed immediately. Expressions of astonishment thinly covered a wistful disappointment all round that the whole effort of months of observation, and still more months of investigation, had led to a mere handshake!

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Still, we came to an understanding that for the time being, and after so much dust, *après toute cette histoire*, the charms of France should become, for a while, a memory —and a hope.

Many a time since have I enjoyed those charms again, adding to them a regular call at the Sûreté on each return.

"*He! Nom de Dieu! Voilà le vieux Rin-tin-tin qui rapplique à Paris, pour faire la bombe!*"

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CHAPTER XIII

WHILE still in Paris, I ran across an American friend of mine, a well-known journalist, who had heard of the Sûreté affair. Needless to say, after the happy ending of it all, I could not possibly afford to satiate his journalistic craving for sensationalism "*à l'Americaine*," with piping-hot details straight from the horse's mouth.

But our discussion over a series of cocktails brought me to the decision that he was right in saying that it would be a pity if my memoirs accompanied me to the grave—which even I must some day fill.

Discussion had led to decision, and decision now led to realisation. As a German I felt that I should publish the memoirs of a German Intelligence Officer within Germany.

At that time party strife was rampant in Germany, and the various hostile camps employed every conceivable means to discredit one another.

Having been active throughout the years of my stay in the Rhineland in supporting the *Deutsch-Nationalen*, I knew beforehand that if I brought out my war-time memoirs through either publishers or papers of the Right Wing, at a time when war memoirs were "taboo" for Liberals, Democrats and the Left Wing generally, a storm would break loose over my poor head. So I decided to go the other way round: if my memoirs were published by Left-Wing people, they would arouse no opposition in *that* quarter; as for the Right-Wing people, they would be sure to understand, and in any case would approve of my actions in the War and after, and my recounting them.

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This reasoning made me approach the famous Liberal firm of publishers, Ullstein and Company in Berlin.

My offer was flatly turned down.

So back I went to Paris, to look up my American journalist friend.

A week had scarcely elapsed since Ullstein's curt "No," when I received this long-worded telegram:

> "Contrary to what we stated in our letter of the other day, we can assure you that we have the greatest imaginable interest in your memoirs, and would lay particular stress on your having them published through our agency. Please break off any negotiations pending, and return to Berlin. All and any expenses incurred will be gladly refunded to you.
>
> (*Signed*) ULLSTEIN AND COMPANY."

"*Welche Wendung!*" What a conversion!

A few hours later the "Nord-Express" was rushing me to Berlin.

The initialling of a contract was the matter of a few hours.

In paragraph No. 3, I think, I had it specifically laid down—much to the surprise, if not the indignation, of Messrs. Ullstein and Company, who emphatically insisted that they were independent publishers, and free from any ties—that these memoirs were to be published upon my own responsibility, without any Government department having occasion to "inspect" them.

I had my reasons.

* * * * *

All through the summer of 1930, and well into the autumn, in the unique beauty of the Rhine valley and its enclosing mountains and hills, and as long as the climate permitted it, in the open air, I wrote and wrote and wrote.

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As the book proceeded, quite a staff of Ullstein employees —writers, typists, stenographers—appeared on the scene to re-write, re-cast, re-model, wherever author-apprentice had shown signs of his inexperience, though he showed himself adamant whenever his assistants allowed their journalistic impulses to run away with them.

Bottles of Moselle and *Rheinwein* were always open, to calm frayed nerves, and a powerful 'Isotta' Fraschini was ever handy to carry our racked spirits into the refreshing heights of Eifel or Siebengebirge, which, with the rest of the Rhineland, the French were then evacuating.

* * * * *

With the book completed, and full of satisfaction at knowing that things were now well under way, I embarked for New York, for the purpose of disposing of the copyrights in America.

I felt so care-free as I sailed across the Atlantic that my only preoccupation was how best I should translate, or at least adapt, the German title of my memoirs: *Von Admiralstab bis Zuchthaus.*

In the midst of most pleasant negotiations with Doubleday, Doran and Co., a thunderbolt fell from Berlin, from the Kochstrasse, the headquarters of Ullstein and Co.:

> "Please return as soon as circumstances permit. Stop. Important developments."

What was that? "Developments"? Developments? An exchange of cablegrams did not help to clarify the mysteriously worded message. Finally:

> "I shall be back in Berlin about the middle of February."

* * * * *

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My serious negotiations about the sale of the copyright of *The Dark Invader* in America brought me once again in touch with the police.

This time, however—lest you should draw too hasty a conclusion—I was on the *right* side of the law.

But the incident was in different ways so amusing and so enlightening that I feel it should be put on record.

I was staying at the Barbizon Plaza Hotel in 58th Street, peacefully installed in one of its charming flats. In former times this place was the abode of the community of New York painters, which is how the hotel comes to have its arty name. At that time very few people in New York took the trouble to put on evening dress; they had scarcely recovered their equanimity after the great slump of the preceding winter. So that, when the taxi-drivers who were habitually stationed at the rank near by saw a well-dressed man stepping slowly down the magnificent steps of the hotel, they were all eager to drive him to the place where he was invited to spend the evening.

No doubt after several trips of this nature they made inquiries, or learnt somehow or other—possibly from the stately hotel porter—who it was they had the pleasure of conveying to Park Avenue or Fifth Avenue houses.

They invariably received a substantial tip from me when they called at the appointed hour to take me back to my hotel; but one of their guild was out for a richer harvest.

One morning I received a telephone call at my suite: "This is Miss B. . . .'s butler speaking. Miss B. asks me to tell you that she would like you to dine with her to-night, and go to the theatre afterwards. Will you be free?"

"Yes; and will you please convey my thanks to Miss B. for her kind suggestion?"

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"Very well, sir; I shall give your message. She has instructed me to tell you she will call in her car at 7.45 at your hotel to fetch you."

"Then I shall be waiting there for her in the hall."

At twenty minutes to eight, when I was just preparing to take the lift down from my apartment on the twentieth floor, the telephone rang, and the same male voice spoke:

"Miss B. has had a slight breakdown with her car, and has taken it herself to the garage in 52nd Street. Would you mind taking a taxi-cab to meet her there?"

"Certainly: I shall be there in a few minutes."

Down I went, and one of my regular taxi-drivers stood before the front-door and, pointing to his taxi, said:

"Step in here, won't you, Captain?"

A few seconds later we were dashing at full speed in the direction of the garage in 52nd Street, with nothing to hold us up except the one-way streets, which did seem, however, more numerous than I had thought. Still, a man who is going out to join a charming lady for a pleasant evening has other things in his mind than street-signs and the like.

But one thing I did, which I always do, no matter in what circumstances, or on what errand, or in what town of the globe I may be. While we drove on I just bent forward and took note of the taxi's number; there is a special corner in my memory reserved for numbers and figures. I need no written memoranda, and never have—thanks to my Intelligence Service training.

Once the numerous corners and street-blocks had been negotiated, the brakes of the taxi squealed—in front of a fairly large garage. I stepped out briskly, and my obsequious driver ushered me straight into the open hall.

"Where is Miss B.?", I at once inquired.

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The chauffeur looked round, exchanged a few words with a man in overalls, and, pointing to a door, said with a surprised tone in his voice:

"Oh, Captain, Miss B. has gone upstairs to wash her hands; she has been attending to the car herself."

I went up a dimly-lit staircase, expecting I should find Miss B. with the garage-keeper's wife.

A door was opened the moment I arrived on the landing—to be closed with a snap immediately I had passed through.

At the same moment three revolvers were levelled at me.

I stopped, and instinctively turned round towards my faithful taxi-driver, whom I had heard walking upstairs close on my heels.

He was leaning with his full weight against the door, a broad smile on his face, and before I could open my mouth, he calmly said:

"Captain, you better come easy."

He had hardly finished when another voice gruffly growled at me:

"Will you pay this young woman's bill or not?"

"This young woman's bill? What is all this about?"

In the meantime a second door had been pulled open, and there I saw half-a-dozen scantily dressed young women, and about an even number of "gentlemen" sitting before bottles of gin and what was called champagne in those Prohibition days.

One of the women walked up to me, and began to speak, her voice choked by sobs. Whether these were genuine or not, I did not bother to make out. One thing was clear: this woman was certainly not Miss B.,—in fact, anything but!

And yet, this "she" had been so well rehearsed for her

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part in the game, that amidst her sobs it came out quite clearly that I was "indebted" to this night club to the tune of 165 dollars.

"You will meet this obligation—of course, won't you?"

"What?"

"No what!" shouted one of the three revolvered cavaliers. "No what . . . you pay! A gentleman like you will certainly meet the obligations of a lady friend."

"I've never seen this woman in my life."

"Never mind about those details: she says you are her friend, and you pay those hundred and sixty-five dollars *right now*."

I grasped the situation—with these revolvers pointing at me . . . in some speak-easy . . . in a dark street in New York.

"Gentlemen, it is a habit of mine never to carry on me in the evening more than ten or twenty dollars. Here are fifteen dollars. For the rest, you will, of course, accept my I.O.U. . . ."

Thanks to the British Admiralty and the Department of Justice in Washington, I had met more difficult customers, stranger characters,—in Atlanta!

My three revolvered opponents certainly did realise how shock-proof I had been rendered.

With an easy grace, otherwise motionless, I pulled out of my pocket-book, one after the other, one ten-dollar and one five-dollar bill . . . every second gained made me feel more composed and sarcastic.

"Besides your revolvers . . . you do carry fountain-pens, don't you?"

The three revolvers automatically disappeared in the hip-pockets.

"Sit down, Captain: here's a chair."

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With the gentleman's fountain-pen I calmly made out an I.O.U. for 150 dollars, and while I was writing I heard his voice—already much gentler:—"Of course, a gentleman like you will honour his I.O.U."

"Of course, of course! Will you please call at my hotel to-morrow morning?"

I expected him to hesitate . . . but no! No guile!

"I'll be round there at ten o'clock to-morrow morning. Have a drink, meantime, Captain, won't you?"

"Yes; if it's any good—why not?"

I was led to a sumptuous bar, and my host, who may or may not have seen better days, showed himself a master at the art of serving what proved to be an excellent Scotch whisky.

The rest of the gentlemen, including my taxi-driver, had meantime disappeared, but I felt a bit uneasy when I found myself, a few minutes later, in a dark street,—a street of "garages" it truly seemed to be. . . .

Now the time to act had come!

I immediately, upon return to my hotel, took the night-receptionist aside. . . . The story was told quickly enough. . . . They know their job in New York.

"Would you mind going upstairs to your apartment? Our house-detective will come and see you in a few minutes."

We two "experts" quickly devised a plan for the gentleman's reception at ten o'clock. The house-detective was to be my private secretary, while I had gone to my bank "down-town" to get the 150 dollars still owing.

According to plan, the easy-speaking gentleman made his appearance at ten o'clock, was most courteously received by my private secretary, who agreed with the caller that, inasmuch as his "duties" made him stay up all night, he

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had better make his final call at ten o'clock the morning after—and in the meantime take his well-earned rest.

The I of the I.O.U., however, was at the hour of the gentleman's first call already at Police Headquarters; he did not see any reason to warrant his parting with 150 dollars for the night-lady and her male friends.

With the help of the police officer in charge of the New York taxi-cabs, I went over the file of Driver No. . . .

"Is that your man?" he inquired, showing me the photograph kept on the file.

"Yes; that's the man!"

"You don't mind me asking, have you any identification papers yourself—or can any one vouch for you? Because this is a serious case, and we want to be on the safe side."

"I shall dash across to the Federal Building and see Judge John C. Knox, he can . . ."

"Judge Knox knows about you?"

"Yes; he knows *all* about me; he *has* for some years now. Only, one condition, please. I count upon you not to call in any journalists and have my name dragged into the papers."

"Rest assured; no newspaper-men will be present."

What exactly passed over the wires between Judge Knox's Chambers and the New York Police Headquarters, the reader can pretty well guess. At any rate, I received a telephone message in the afternoon to appear as a witness at ten o'clock the next day.

While all this was going on, my taxi-driver was spotted in the streets of New York, and invited—although, presumably, not quite as politely—to come to Police Headquarters too. . . .

* * * * *

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Scene: Seated behind a desk, raised on a daïs, like a throne, sits a man in a gold-braided uniform—the Chief Commissioner of the New York Police.

On either side high officials in uniform, about six in all, as assessors.

A wooden rail.

Near the wall, guarded by two policemen, my friend, the taxi-driver.

"Captain, will you please repeat before this Police-Court what happened the night before last?"

My story, describing the occurrences minute after minute, as they had taken place, was told without any divergence whatsoever from my first report, of which stenographic minutes had been taken.

"Thank you, Captain. Judge Knox has given all explanations we could require."

Upon this, I made a signal to one of the police superintendents. He quickly stepped down, and I whispered in his ear: "Do be lenient towards this fellow: I've learnt he is the father of a family."

This request was in turn whispered to the Chief Commissioner.

The Commissioner's stern voice now rang out:

"Taxi-driver No. . . ., step forward. Tell your story."

The driver hesitated a moment, looked at me triumphantly, as if he still had a trump card in his hand, presumably as a revenge for the fate I had brought upon him, and—as he had promptly "squealed"—on his speak-easy confederates as well, and began:

"When I picked up this man totally drunk in 58th Street . . ."

Like a roar, it burst from the Commissioner's lips:

"You fool, you —— rascal! . . . Do you know what

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this gentleman has just asked me? He says you're the father of a family, and he's asked me to be lenient. And he's more than one reason for bringing a severe charge against you. But now you've brought everything upon yourself. I sentence you to the maximum penalty, and you will never drive a taxi again in the streets of this city! . . . As far as your friends and their speak-easy are concerned, their place is smashed up, and there's nothing left.

"Take him away!"

Upon this the Commissioner stepped towards me:

"Let me thank you, Captain, for the service you have rendered to this city. I wish that more people had the courage to come forward and complain to us, instead of paying up, and letting such things pass in silence."

"Well, sir, most people are too afraid of publicity. To have one's name in the papers . . . But that reminds me: I thank you for your courtesy in keeping this affair among ourselves."

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CHAPTER XIV

1931

I RETURNED, this time on the *Ile de France*, and I may say at once that I fell so deeply in love with French vessels that, if I can help it, no other flag will see me sail henceforth; and if my readers should be curious enough to inquire why I thus fell in love, the answer can be quite simply given:

Fancy, at each *repas*, a litre-bottle of vintage wine gratis! In fact, it worked out to more than that. There were four people at my table, and two of them ladies, who only drank a half-litre between them. . . . We two males shared their "leavings," and I can assure you the extra three-quarters of a litre was none too much to drown my anxieties and suspicions as to what might be the mystery in the Kochstrasse, and what the "developments" in Berlin might mean.

During a week's strolling up and down the decks of the *Ile de France* my mind perpetually revolved round the enigma that had emanated from the massive building in the Kochstrasse that harboured the almighty house of Ullstein and Company.

As the ocean gale waxed more and more furious, the veil which surrounded this enigma was torn away: Ullstein the Almighty had, after all, not proved to be the independent firm they had so vociferously boasted they were, less than a year ago; they had "seen" the Wilhelmstrasse!

"Well, if that is really so, paragraph No. 3 of our agreement will soon have to be applied.

"Let's wait and see. . . ."

* * * * *

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The habitual flying visit to Paris: the equally habitual session Rue Duphot, *chez Prunier*; and once again the Nord-Express was carrying me towards Berlin. But this time my journey suffered a slight interruption.

On the platform at Cologne stood my solicitor, excitedly waving a copy of the *Kölnische Zeitung* of two days before.

There it was! The first open attempt of some "friends" in the Auswärtige Amt, who had thought that my absence in America offered a beautiful opportunity for a *Dolchstoss*, a stab in the back—the "dastardly" act of which "only the Socialists and Spartacists" were capable, when they "betrayed" the Fatherland in November 1918.

Now at last, they thought, they had successfully dealt the *Dolchstoss* to one whom a great nation would be proud to count among its most devoted sons.

I had heard of similar stories before, but could never trace the source. Here at last I had my story pinned down, and the *Cologne Gazette* being in close touch with the Auswärtige Amt, the source was evident.

The newspaper had published a special wire,—allegedly sent from New York, but whose style and tone alone were obvious proof that it emanated from the Wilhelmstrasse—stating that "Rintelen had joined his country's former enemies in the case of the American sabotage claims against the German Reich."

My handbags were simply flung out of the Pullman-car window—the stop at Cologne was only a minute or two—and out I jumped after them. Pstt!! A taxi—and five minutes later my solicitor and I knocked at the door of the Editor-in-Chief of the *Kölnische Zeitung*.

"Herr Chef-Redakteur," I addressed him, "you recognise this issue of your Gazette?"

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"Ye-es. What of it?"

"Do you notice column 1, page 1? Right down here, my name in block letters?"

"Yes, and——?"

Upon which my solicitor in a sonorous voice read out the words of the attack prepared in Berlin and launched in Cologne.

The Herr Chef-Redakteur shifted a bit uneasily in the editorial chair.

There followed a few moments of icy silence.

Icier still came my verdict:

"Herr Chef-Redakteur, to-morrow morning's issue of the *Kölnische Zeitung* shall contain on the same page, in the same column, in the same place, in the same type, and with the same headline, the following editorial statement:

> "The *Kölnische Zeitung* has satisfied itself that the message purporting to emanate from New York, and stating that Captain Rintelen had joined the opponents of Germany in the case of the sabotage claims, is entirely false and based on erroneous information."

The Herr Chef-Redakteur gazed at me: "Anything else, Herr Kapitän?"

"No; no damages will be claimed by me in a case which affects my honour as a German and as an officer, for I do not doubt your bona fides. But if your Gazette should decide *not* to publish what I have prescribed, my lawyer, who is sitting here, has prepared the papers, and will immediately proceed to the *Landgericht*. As a consequence you realise the investigation into the root cause of this filthy 'message from New York'—to wit, the sabotage cases—will inevitably lead to all the details concerning them being brought out

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in open court, here in Cologne. Nothing could be more welcome to *me*. You will be astounded at the number of witnesses who will be subpœnæd from high Government quarters in Berlin. *And* you'll also see how soon they will bite the dust! The very idea makes my mouth water!"

My solicitor and I departed; coming from behind the door we closed, I believe I heard a deep sigh. . . .

The *démenti* duly appeared in the *Kölnische Zeitung*. The morning after, at ten o'clock, I made my appearance in the Kochstrasse at Ullstein and Company's.

Sour faces met me all round.

"Yes, Herr Kapitän, there is a report from New York which has appeared in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, that strikes at the basis of our contract. . . . Will you kindly look at this copy of the *Kölnische Zeitung*?"

"No need; will you kindly look at *this* copy of the *Kölnische Zeitung*: it reached me by express mail this morning, with the editor's compliments."

The assembled directors of Ullstein passed the copy round from one to the other; no film could possibly register the expressions of surprise on the various faces. I sat calmly watching the scene.

The board retired. A few minutes later, with a wry smile on his face, one of them returned, and on behalf of them all invited me to lunch at the Hotel Kaiserhof.

Luncheon at the Kaiserhof. If Ullstein's invite one to the Kaiserhof . . . What was behind that? Still, nothing to be gained by refusing.

The most opulent meal, with the rarest of vintages! A talk on shoes and ships and sealing-wax. . . .

Finally, the coffee was served.

Some preliminary humming and hawing, and one of my hosts with a hesitating voice, delivered himself as follows:

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"Herr Kapitän, you will understand that in view of the nature of your book, *Von Admiralstab bis Zuchthaus*, we have felt it our duty . . ."

"Yes; you have been to see the Wilhelmstrasse about my book?"

No answer.

I broke the silence.

"Paragraph 3 of our contract, *meine Herren*, lays down . . . I can see from your faces that you will remember what it lays down. Will you please give instructions at your cashier's office that the balance still owing to me on the 25,000 marks agreed upon, and originally to be paid in instalments, be paid out to me in full this afternoon? . . . On the other hand, this excellent luncheon you have so kindly arranged for me I shall consider sufficient damages."

"We accept, Herr Kapitän."

What took place after this meeting within the board room of the firm of Ullstein I do not know. But at five o'clock a telephone message came through:—

"We have no notes of large denomination in the office at the moment, only small notes, and cash. Would you consent to wait till to-morrow?"

"Never mind: you can pay me in *Pfennige*, if you like, and I shall bring a pantechnicon to cart them away. But I will be at your cashier's office at six o'clock this evening, and am leaving Berlin—with the balance still owing paid to me—to-night."

I left Berlin by the night-express, with the balance—two handbags full of five- and ten-mark notes!

* * * * *

The "telegram from New York" published in the *Kölnische Zeitung* suggested that the attacks on me from inside the Auswärtige Amt had not been confined to this side of the Atlantic.

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I determined to investigate further, and my investigations took me back to that unfortunate seizure of documents in my hotel in Paris by the Sûreté Générale, after the Foreign Office had declared that " I could not be located."

As I have said, I had reported this matter at once to Herr de Haas. I now discovered that Herr Hossenfelder and his school had found an easy way of turning the incident to their profit. For what was simpler than to declare that it had been *my* fault that those documents were now in the possession of the American Government?

But they were not to get away with that story for long.

Even for me, accustomed as I was to strong doses from Berlin, this was a bit too much; I accordingly wrote to Admiral Hall, asking him to set this right.

The letter he wrote to me is worth quoting in part, if only so that it may be compared with another letter written about the same time by a friend, after a conversation with one Herr Löhneysen, a Counsellor of Legation of the Auswärtige Amt, who, in contrast to Herr de Haas, thought it advisable to deny before the Mixed Claims Commission what had actually occurred, but, in contrast to Herr Hossenfelder, did not consider that object justified him in vilifying me personally. Herr Löhneysen took up the attitude that my mission of 1915 had been a blunder of " those military people," and " explained " his point of view in the short phrase here quoted.

I do not think that you need fear that any one can bemirch your reputation.

No man endured more for his country than you, and whatever your mission was to America, I think that that is something to be proud of.

(*Signed*) W. R. HALL.

The Auswärtige Amt declare that, inasmuch as it was impossible to hamper all munition factories and to stop all munition transports, your activity did more harm than good. . . .

(*Signed*) * * *

I think no comment is needed.

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In April 1931 I received the sad news that my brother-in-law, Avvocato Gabriello Carnazza, in Catania, had an acute attack of pericarditis, and that his life was in great danger.

I jumped into the Rheingold-Express: Cologne, Basle—and thence, at top speed, on to Roma, Napoli, across the Straits of Messina; and on the platform at Catania, my nephew, a young solicitor, greeted me with the sad words: "You are only just in time."

But a few days later, we laid Carnazza to rest by his wife's side, by the side of their eldest son, who had fallen, fighting for King and Country, on the Isonzo Front.

During the hours that preceded Ecc. Gabriello Carnazza's funeral, the population of Catania and the neighbouring towns was in a state of great excitement.

Carnazza had been *the* Sicilian Member of the Cabinet —there was always one, just like the revered Marchese di San Giuliano in August 1914. He had held various portfolios under Mussolini, with whom, though differing in political conviction, he had loyally co-operated. But now instructions had been sent from Rome that the civil and military authorities were not to take part in the funeral of this, Sicily's great son, and her representative in the Government!

Every wall in Catania was immediately covered with posters of protest, each ending with the words: "Evviva la Libertà!"

There were some signed by the Rector of Catania University, honouring the memory of their late Lecturer and Professor; there were others from the High Court of Justice in Sicily, celebrating the eminent jurist Carnazza had been. Others, again, from the Bar of Catania paying tribute to one who had been the most eloquent pleader of

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his generation. All three appealed to their members to be present "in corpore."

As the procession followed the hearse through the main avenue, the Via Etnea, the street lamps all covered with crêpe, and the shop windows all closed and shuttered, there were to be seen in every side street the deputations from the official bodies and from the military garrison of Catania: —they *had* obeyed; they had not taken part in the funeral; but their salute to the great dead was not denied him.

When the hearse was in the Piazzale and had arrived in front of the great Greek Portico, the procession unexpectedly halted—you might have thought it a setting for Antony's Funeral Oration over Cæsar.

The most respected leader of the Socialist party in Sicily, a fierce political adversary of Carnazza during his life-time, mounted an improvised platform, and in the most beautiful language praised the man, who so often had appeared in court for people in the humblest station in life and too poor to pay a penny for barristers' fees, and delivered the most eulogistic funeral oration, rendered still more impressive by the dense masses of all Catania assembled under the bluest of Sicilian skies.

"Evviva la Libertà!" was the rousing cry on everybody's lips; one in which the dead man would have joined generously during his life-time.

Barely a few minutes after the long-expected death of Ecc. Gabriello Carnazza, carabinieri threw a cordon round his house in the Viale Venti Settembre; for what purpose I was not to learn until days afterwards. Neither did Carnazza's sons and relatives divulge until quite some time afterwards the subject of secret discussions which had gone on for hours within my brother-in-law's library. The

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mysterious conference had, I was given to understand, centred on a series of confidential documents referring to the death of the great Socialist leader Matteotti! Needless to say, neither brother nor sons of the dead statesman had the remotest idea where that dossier could possibly be—which Carnazza, as Cabinet Minister, had considered to be the property of the State, rather than that of the Capo del Governo.

The upshot of the vain search that was made was that the Capo del Governo, who had, on two occasions, been invited to prolonged stays at my sister's house, abstained from sending as much as a word of condolence over Italy's loss—in striking contrast to what Signor Giurati, as Head of the Fascist Party, had done, in the dignified terms of his telegraphic message, on behalf of the Camera dei Deputati and the Fascist Party as such.

* * * * *

Days of rest and quiet followed, which helped me gradually to forget the sad loss, days spent amidst the beauty of the " Primavera Siciliana," at Carnazza's magnificent country seat ' Canalicchio,' up the slopes of Etna.

The breakfast each morning was set for me under a different fruit-tree—the one whose fruit was just " a point " that morning. I needed only to stretch up my hand. . . .

Before my eyes the blue-grey waters, washing the shores of Sicily; and beyond, the sinister mountains of Calabria, separated only by the Straits of Messina!

Messina, where some fifteen years ago the Royal Italian Dockyards had supplied the famous cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* with " best-quality Cardiff coal "—sufficient to let them reach the Dardanelles! Who, in those days of August 1914, would have thought that this supply of coal

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would, in the long run, have such far-reaching effects: the Dardanelles campaign, which gradually absorbed half a million Allied troops, with losses untold, and immense prolongation of the struggle on the Western Front? . . .

All this drama, scene by scene, rose up vividly before my eyes, as I sat gazing for hours on end at the peaceful Straits, the " birthplace " of one of history's most bloody struggles, so fatefully ended in—nothing.

* * * * *

Three months later, the Norddeutsche Lloyd invited my daughter Marie-Luise and myself to embark on the giant liner *Bremen* for Southampton.

On a glorious summer morning the tender brought us to the Royal Pier; and there he stood, waving his arms as a salute of welcome, his hands neatly encased in yellow gloves, dressed in a trim navy-blue suit, his white hair curled by the sea breeze—our host, Admiral Sir Reginald Hall.

We left the tender, and my daughter and Sir Reginald Hall shook hands gaily. It was their first meeting, but an onlooker would never have guessed it.

" Ladies first! "

A minute after our departure from the pier in a brand-new saloon, with all the latest gadgets, the newly-mets, enthusiastic motorists both, were deeply engaged in exchanging technicalities and—glances, to the ever-growing astonishment of " Papa," who was seated forlornly in the back; he might have dropped through the bottom and vanished like a lost suitcase, the two in front would never have noticed!

Such was the result of a casual P.S.:

> " If, by any chance, your daughter should be with you, don't hesitate to bring her along."

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Stepping forward from the porch of her house came our hostess, with outstretched arms. There was the same warmth in Lady Hall's greeting to my daughter as there had been when, five years before, she welcomed me as the first German since the War to stay under her roof.

Hardly had formal introductions been exchanged when Admiral Hall laid his arm around Marie-Luise's shoulder, and neither of us will ever forget his words to her and the thought that lay behind them:

> "We want you to consider yourself from now on a member of our family."

A fine Reparation for a home broken in Germany through the mercilessness of war!

After such warm-hearted words from Sir Reginald and Lady Hall, it seemed quite natural that what we had looked forward to as a pleasant week-end with acquaintances, should turn out to be, for my daughter, a several months' stay with her new "family."

As for myself, I caught the *Bremen* at Southampton on her return voyage back to Germany.

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CHAPTER XV

THERE was one gentleman, one man of sane and sober senses, in the Auswärtige—Herr Dr. Dieckhoff, since Dr. de Haas relinquished the post, the Director of the Department for British and American Affairs.

A bolt from the blue brought us together.

Mr. George Gordon Battle, tired of fifteen years of waiting, had sent to me an ultimatum, to be presented to the Berlin Government. He pointed out that this long-drawn affair had not escaped the notice of the New York Bar Association, and that, inasmuch as their anger was now thoroughly roused, it was inevitable that they would take an active hand in the matter, unless by the end of December of that year, 1931, the notorious question of his fee had been settled to the satisfaction of the Bar Association.

I passed this ultimatum on to Dr. Dieckhoff, adding, in a covering note, that I realised there was something to be said for the argument stressed by certain Government officials, that it might compromise the Reich if it became known that the latter had paid the fees for my defence during the sabotage trials over in America.

If, therefore, the Reich Government gave the sum to Smith, and Smith gave it to Brown, and Brown to Robinson and Robinson to Mr. Battle, Mr. Battle would understand, —so long as I could assure Mr. Battle that the sum had not been paid out of my own pocket! If, however, even this procedure was not adopted by the Reich, and Mr. Battle was therefore forced to bring a suit against the Reich, it would be my duty, in loyalty to Mr. Battle, to side with him,

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and *not*, to my regret, with the Reich Government, which would place me in the most fearful position, as unavoidably the sabotage cases, as the root and cause of the fee dispute, would be brought into open court.

I congratulated myself on receiving by return mail a word from Dr. Dieckhoff to the effect that immediate instructions had been given to the Consul-General in New York to settle Mr. Battle's claim. Yet, the latter, obstinately insisting that he knew better, did not obey the order.

A brief exchange of notes and cablegrams—Battle, Rintelen, Dieckhoff, Consulate—and this time, so I was informed by a private note from Dr. Dieckhoff, the order *was* obeyed. I knew now that there would be no litigation, after all. The matter, to my infinite relief, was settled. I thought no more about it.

But imagine my surprise when, on New Year's Day, some three weeks later, I, who had done all I could to assist the German Government in keeping the transaction as unofficial as possible, received a very official letter from the Treasury Department in Berlin.

Delivered at last from the bombardment it had been subjected to by me for so many years, the innocent Treasury felt it necessary, by letter No. O—1208—46792 I.B., to give me solid, judicial proof that the matter in dispute had at last been laid to rest.

Yes, but what sort of rest! For there it stood in unmistakable terms, on the copy of the receipt enclosed with the Treasury's letter:

> "Received from the German Consulate-General in New York on behalf of the Reich Government, for the defence of Captain Rintelen, in 1917 and 1918, the sum of.....
>
> (*Signed*) GEO. GORDON BATTLE."

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The Consul-General in New York had given the "whole show" away!—Everything the Wilhelmstrasse had been fighting for during fifteen years! What ninnies there are in this world!

So serious was the Reich's predicament, thanks to this master-stroke, that I felt it my duty to proceed in person to Berlin, and look up Dr. Dieckhoff. It required but a few minutes to drive home the full seriousness of the position.

"Don't you think, Herr Kapitän," he asked, "that it would be best for us to try to reach a compromise with the Americans over these confounded sabotage cases?"

"Herr Doktor, those are the very words which were spoken to me, in this same room, from behind this same desk, seated on the same arm-chair, by your predecessor, Herr Doktor de Haas, six years ago. Imagine how much prestige, on the moral plane, and how much interest, on the material, we have lost through this procrastination. As you know, the Americans are the *beati possidentes*, for they have sequestrated all German property during the War, and are withholding from us those millions ever since Congress has passed the Alien Property Release Bill."

"In 1926?" was his stupefied reply.

"Yes; and while I was in London, on my way to America, in that year, I received a letter from Dr. de Haas saying that he had been overruled,—and the 'moon-and-sixpence' school are still trying to fight it out. . . .

"You see me quite willing to help wherever I can help; yes, even though some people *within this house* have had the audacity to declare that I have given 'secrets' away.

"You realise, Herr Ministerial-Direktor, that that is a grave thing to say: but I do not take it too seriously, because those poor lads do not realise that there *are* no more secrets in reference to me and the sabotage in the

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United States, as all has been brought out during my three fair public trials in America; and anything that might have been missing has been supplied by the British Admiralty, which has handed over to the Americans hundreds of intercepted messages, whether sent by wireless or otherwise."

We parted, and Dr. Dieckhoff assured me he would leave no stone unturned to put a definite stop to this useless "fighting" against necessity.

Yet those stones remain unturned to the present day!

I left the Auswärtige Amt pondering over what might have been behind this endless affair. It dawned upon me when I learnt, a few weeks later, that the German representative on the Mixed Claims Commission, a judge and a Gentile by the way, not a Polish or Galician Jew,—had received, after a collection among "interested parties" in Germany, a present in the form of 500,000 Reichsmark!

It seems to pay to "fight it out."

* * * * *

This self-same December 1931 saw the end of my struggle with the house of Ullstein and Company. For what I, and they for that matter too, had expected to become a long-lasting and pleasant business connection, had been a struggle indeed.

Yet, with what boundless enthusiasm they had received and supported me when our contract was signed in May 1930!

Then came their ill-starred move towards the Wilhelmstrasse, where, of course,—a thousand times, of course,—the advice was given them either not to undertake the publication of Rintelen's memoirs at all, or else to hold them back and play a "putting-off" game as long as possible,—or, if you prefer, as long as Rintelen would stand for it.

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There is no need to repeat the story of how their vaunted independence as publishers had vanished into nothing before the sour expression of some enlightened official.

There is no need either to repeat that Ullstein's had had to pay the price for their cowardice.

Now they were foaming with rage that they should have been outwitted, as they felt it, by my insisting upon nothing but my legitimate rights.

They tried, therefore, to get their own back, by refusing to permit me to publish anywhere in the world for as long as the wording of the contract allowed them to dictate these terms to me.

I smarted under the useless delay. It was the worst thing that could befall a man like me, always bent on action and new enterprise.

Gold standard or no gold standard, 1931 was, in the field of international politics at least, a year fairly free from clouds, and the period had begun when war-time reminiscences were very much *en vogue*, once *Journey's End* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* had succeeded in reviving mutual sympathy and esteem, and in healing war-time sores.

My book, both in its original German version, *Von Admiralstab bis Zuchthaus*, and in the little altered English version, *The Dark Invader*, was friendly in tone, though not free from a bit of sarcasm over how Fate can play havoc with us poor human beings, and recognising, on principle, *not* that might goes before right, but that the interest of one individual must not be weighed when the interest of a whole nation is in the balance. For such was the light in which I regarded the question of the legality of my extradition to America, though a British prisoner-of-war.

Now Ullstein's were insisting upon their pound of flesh to the last, although in spring 1931 they had declared

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to me already that they had abandoned the project of publication for good.

No matter how often I tried to batter the walls in the Kochstrasse in Berlin, they did not give in: each letter of evasion was signed by a different department manager!

Well, it could not be helped! But no sooner had the 31st of December come round—the date when the contract lapsed—than I notified the Kochstrasse of my intentions: that it was a source of deep, deep regret to me that a German officer's, a German patriot's book—the story of deeds and misdeeds done in the performance of my duty, and therefore justified in the eyes of any fair-minded man or woman should be published in a foreign—nay, a former enemy—country. But so it had to be, unless, within the six weeks' grace I was still willing to accord, Ullstein's had started publication in the *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*, as originally arranged.

"No!"

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CHAPTER XVI

1932

VERY well, then, if Berlin is against it, London may be for it. Every possible and imaginable effort to convince Berlin that History, after all, is History, and cannot be made to order, and that "Truth will out," had been made; now the die was cast.

* * * * *

No Department in Berlin is ever aware of what is going on in any other. So I was not surprised when one of the various offices still occupied with winding up the War discovered quite suddenly that accounts with me had not yet been settled, and wrote to inform me of the fact.

It appeared that the time had come to close and file away the "dossier" referring to my travelling expenses in 1915 and similar items, over which I had been left a heavy loser.

The office in question therefore inquired whether I agreed to this burial—which, of course, as a matter of principle, I did *not*.

There followed a long correspondence between the office and myself; then, finally, a decision was taken.

I received a pompous letter, full of long explanations, from which I gathered that the Reich felt it still owed me something!

The mountain, as I had foreseen, brought forth its mouse; I was "awarded" four hundred marks, under the heading of "Uebergangsgeld."

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"*Übergang*"?—I looked up in the Dictionary. *Transition?* Yes, they were opening a new file. *Passover?* Yes, it was about Easter time. *Crossing?* If so, from where to where, or from what to what? Hunger to Starvation? Freedom to Prison? Life to Death? From one phase of my struggle to another? What matter! It would take me to England, with a good drink thrown in.

* * * * *

Before crossing, I spent a glorious Easter holiday with friends on the banks of the Elbe, in the outskirts of Hamburg; the warm sun was calling up snowdrops, primroses and daffodils.

On my way there I had broken my journey to look up Herr Doktor Bracht. Ten years ago, Separatists had made us join hands on the Rhine occupation. Now he was holding watch on the Ruhr, specially delegated by the Reich Government to be Oberbürgermeister of Essen, its capital.

Dr. Bracht ruled with a strong hand, and had succeeded in bringing the political parties together for truly reconstructive work; and not in Essen alone. Throughout Ruhr and Rhine his predominant influence had made itself felt.

He was an excellent choice for this post, the next in importance, in the Western Province, to Cologne. Dr. Bracht enjoyed the full backing of Dr. Brüning and his Cabinet, and had the confidence of the aged Field-Marshal Hindenburg, who made a point of paying him a visit in state.

I sat in Dr. Bracht's house, and we reviewed the changes the past decade had brought to once so disrupted Ruhr and Rhine. Now all seemed peace and security; his only fear was that, before long, reactionary forces might drive a wedge

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once more into the political unity which had showed itself stronger than any onslaughts, from within and without, ten years ago.

Dr. Bracht's calm composure was truly uplifting for one who felt so aggrieved over the shilly-shallying in some quarters in Berlin, where sincerity and loyalty have been little known, both before and since.

Refreshed by this frank exchange of views with one who was a man, I knew how to lighten with some of my buoyancy the depressed mood in Hanseatic shipping circles. They were dismayed by the ever clearer symptoms of a grave crisis impending for the export and import trades—the life-blood of those two great ports, Hamburg and Bremen.

These were the surroundings in which I spent my last holiday in Germany!

Strangely enough, it was there that the connecting link between author and publisher was formed. A niece of the late Lord Northcliffe, who was staying with friends of mine, drew my attention to certain young, ambitious, pioneer-spirited people in the publishing world in London.

For the first time the name of Lovat Dickson, at that time editor of magazines only, was mentioned to me. I had little cause to regret, as the future was to show, that Mr. Lovat Dickson happened to be a friend of that young lady.

* * * * *

Within three hours of my arrival in London, I had called at the offices of *The Fortnightly Review*, the magazine at that time issued under the ægis of Lovat Dickson.

There I met a young, able, and understanding gentleman. He looked at the first page of the manuscript, and saw its opening words:

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"It is the afternoon of August the 4th, 1914."

* * * * *

"Yes . . . yes . . . that interests me . . . very much indeed."

On May 10th, 1932, a handshake over luncheon at the R.A.C. signified a gentlemen's agreement, unique in the annals of publishing, where long contracts and deeds form the usual inception of a book.

On May 12th, 1932, was signed the "birth-certificate" of Lovat Dickson Limited, in the sanctum of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies.

* * * * *

The mallards and tufted ducks of the Round Pond, the trees and flower-beds of Kensington Gardens, were the witnesses of my careful writing and re-writing, adapting and re-adapting, what lot by lot came from the printers in the course of the summer months to follow.

I came to learn what galley-proofs, page-proofs, blurbs, matrices, stereos and line-blocks are.

My venture into the unknown seas of the literary world was not all plain sailing. More than once the obstinate author that I was ran up against an obdurate publisher, who rightly insisted that he knew better.

If our battles had not been fought to the accompaniment of innumerable glasses of sherry, I do not know when, or how—if ever—the first prints would have taken form.

An eminent London publisher recently unburdened himself on the subject of the relations between author and publisher, by complaining, in the columns of a daily paper, that:

> "authors, at times, not only expected their publishers to find them a wife, or advise them on the wisdom of a contemplated elopement,"

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but:

> " are apt—far more than their books—to be a trial to their publishers; and skilful and fortunate indeed are both author and publisher who can retain through a lifetime of business association a true and abiding friendship."

I am a fortunate one, for my relations with my publishers have stood the test—touch wood!

* * * * *

Soon after my arrival in England for a stay which, once the book agreement had been reached, bore every sign of becoming a permanent one, Scotland Yard rightly felt it their business to make sure that their former enemy was not possibly . . . shall we say? inquisitive.

Whatever doubts they may have had were soon set at rest by a letter from the " opposite number ":

From:

Admiral Sir Reginald Hall,
Hawk's Lease, Lyndhurst.
May 15th, 1932.

> I have known Captain von Rintelen for many years now, and have had the opportunity of seeing him under various circumstances. I can vouch that he has at all times conducted himself as an officer and a gentleman, and I am at any time prepared to answer any questions which may be asked by those entitled to ask them about him.
>
> (*Signed*) W. R. HALL.

Besides this, in a personal letter to Lord Trenchard, I pledged my word for good and ever.

* * * * *

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HERR HAUPTMANN PAPEN

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The summer of 1932 witnessed a delightful correspondence which I had with General Sir Frederick Maurice, who had sent out, on behalf of the British Legion, an appeal to people for holding themselves in readiness for blood transfusions for disabled members of the Legion.

As fate had been on my side, and had allowed me to come unscathed through my " Seven Years' War," Sir Frederick received by return mail my offer to give any quantity of good quality blood as my quiet contribution towards Reparations, and as a token of gratitude to a hospitable country.

* * * * *

This same summer brought the most astonishing political developments in Germany.

Irresponsible elements surrounding the more and more aged President Hindenburg, pressed upon him a still more irresponsible person than themselves, as a substitute to the dignified and popular Chancellor Brüning.

The substitute was Papen, the " tactful " former Military Attaché in New York.

The world at large, and Germany in particular, was dumbfounded and deeply shocked to learn that one of the caricatures of the World War had been found fit to fill a position of such national and international importance.

Herr von Neurath and my personal friend Dr. Bracht both let it be understood, in the plainest language, that they had only joined this Cabinet in the hope of averting a calamity.

Prince Hatzfeld, in a despairing letter, voiced the general feeling, in this bitter comment:

" *Uns allen ist der Mund ver-papt.*"

The sentence means " Now our mouths are all stopped

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up", which is the equivalent of saying: "This leaves me speechless."

There was an outburst in the German Press:—it was considered a disgrace that a man who had made such stupendous blunders in a subordinate position during the War, should now be Chancellor of the German Reich.

Whereupon Papen hastened to announce, by a *Kanzler-Dekret*, that if any paper dared refer to his more cloudy past its editor would have to expiate the indiscretion by a term of imprisonment; and for this offence a brand-new scale of punishments was evolved.

I could not help thinking of the new Reichskanzler's sworn statement of November 1927, so full of his protestations of what an innocent little lamb he had been as Military Attaché in Washington.

Such a lamb, indeed, that upon his return from America, in 1915, he had been acquainted, by Hauptmann Graf Haugwitz, on behalf of the Chief of the General Staff, with an order to the effect that "after such inexplicable occurrences"—as those which had led to his recall as *persona non grata* to the United States Government—the General Staff had no further employment for him on staff-work, and that he was to report to Reserve-Infanterie-Regiment No. — as "Unfit for Staff Duty."

Well—now he was Reichskanzler!

* * * * *

After having disposed of the Press, his next two measures were aimed at suppressing two law-suits about which he had good grounds for being very much afraid.

Shortly before Papen's advent to power, prompted by some instinct or by an uncanny prescience—I do not know which—I had decided to force the issue.

First, I had preferred against Papen a *Straf-Anzeige*, a charge of perjury and treason in time of war—the latter coming

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under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in Leipzig, which I thought must be above intimidation.

Secondly, I had brought a *Selbst-Anzeige*, a charge against myself, for—desertion. This "self-impeachment" would enable me to clear my own name, and prove in open court that the mission I claimed to have been sent on had in fact been organised and ordered by the War Ministry, with the knowledge, the approbation and the assistance of the Foreign Office, who had informed the Embassy, in Washington, and given them instructions to *assist* me.

This "self-impeachment" was a perfectly logical action. For if, as was claimed by the Auswärtige Amt, no one had given me instructions, or even permission, to leave my post at home, in the midst of hostilities, and proceed to America, then I had manifestly been a—deserter.

It is no small matter, if one of the five members of the Naval War Staff department which devotes its attention to 'British Affairs', decides calmly, one fine morning, that he has had enough of the War, puts on civilian clothes and quits the country for a pleasure cruise to the New World.

That is desertion indeed, even if the deserter's disappearance passes unnoticed—as it presumably must have according to the Auswärtige Amt's story—for no less than three years of the War.

I waited for some communication from the Public Prosecutor's Office informing me when the trials would take place.

I arranged for witnesses to come forward.

I wrote to Admiral Hall—and received from him a letter which contained words I shall never forget:

> "I shall consider it my duty to stand by your side, if it should ever *come* to the trial which we are both so much looking forward to."

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I assembled and arranged all the documents I possessed relating to the two cases.

But from the Public Prosecutor nothing came—not a word.

Instead, a plain envelope from the German Embassy in Carlton House Terrace, and in it—my original letter to the Public Prosecutor, folded into six instead of into four, without a covering note of any kind or so much as a stamp or pencil-mark.

The envelope and the suppressed *Straf-Anzeige* are in my possession to this day—two of the most cherished documents in my possession.

O Tempora! O Mores!

Imperial Germany would have understood what it was to be "in honour bound."

* * * * *

Under Papen's democratic rule civil rights and liberties became a dead letter: any necessity created by "governmental requirements," a term that was meant to disguise the well-known dissensions within the Government, was considered sufficient reason for curtailing the right of free speech, or suppressing newspapers which dared to raise their voice in protest or in warning.

No excuse was given for trampling with insane heedlessness upon the most sacred privileges: a curt explanation over the wireless was all the consideration granted to the democratic ideal. Thus was the ground prepared for the only growth that could flourish upon it.

By an odd confusion of thought, the example of Frederick the Great was invoked by this democratic Government as its justification, and its ideal.

Surprising as was this appeal to a monarchical precedent, it became cynical as well when one remembers how

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Frederick prided himself above all on his tolerant Voltairean Liberalism.

Frederick used to lay down as the two guiding principles of *his* Government: "*Man soll den Gazetten ihre Freiheiten lassen*" (One should allow the newspapers their freedom), and "*Jeder soll nach seiner 'façon' selig werden*" (Everyone should be happy in his own way).

It is told that once, when Frederick was riding through the streets of Berlin, he noticed a crowd staring with eager curiosity at a poster hostile to himself, which was stuck up on a wall too high for them to read. The King promptly gave orders to *niedriger hängen* (to hang the poster lower down) "so that every one may read it."

* * * * *

Civic rights were not alone flouted; for the Constitution, the guardian of political rights, was treated with as little regard.

The Supreme Court in Leipzig, one of the most respected assemblies of jurists in all the civilised world, was deliberately held to contempt; the time of those eminent judges was wasted over a hair-splitting question as to how the sovereign rights of the German people should be interpreted and applied. The Court was made to play a grotesque farce. In short, the foundations of sense, logic and reason were overthrown, with disastrous consequences to the morale and the confidence of the whole German nation.

Haphazard decrees, scribbled hastily over some blank signatures, somehow obtained from the ageing Reich President, secured some two or three dissolutions of the Reichstag. After each the German people, however patient by nature, was thrown into deeper anger and greater despair, and many turned more and more menacingly towards

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Communism. One million votes cast in favour of Communism a year or two earlier, had swollen into five millions by the winter of 1932. The Government, which had usurped the style of "Government of National Concentration," found almost the entire nation concentrated against it.

Dr. Bracht, the Acting Vice-Chancellor, who was vainly trying to stem the tide, wrote despairing letters to me and to other friends, in which he expressed the conviction that the perpetual and systematic undermining of public confidence could only lead the country into the morass of Bolshevism, and that National-Socialism was the only salvation in the long run, however unpalatable and unpromising it might appear to him in the immediate future.

National-Socialism? It had begun as a mere handful of deputies, who could hardly be given the status of an independent party. How, the German people wondered in alarm, almost in panic, could this "fiery band" be in any way capable of averting the menace of Communism, so closely allied to Eastern Bolshevism?

Yet what, a year before Papen's régime, would have been declared impossible, became not only possible, but inevitable.

The two extremes of Communism and National-Socialism were all against compromise, and the parties of the *bourgeoisie* classes—Socialist, Democrat, Liberal, and Catholic-Centre—were more and more threatened on either side, and so gradually and mercilessly eaten up. Party funds were soon exhausted by these perpetual election campaigns, and—far more serious—the country's whole economy was gradually overturned.

An export trade surplus which, at the end of 1931, still amounted to some three milliard marks, shrank to one

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milliard within a year. The following figures show the trend that had set in:

1931	. . .	2,967,000,000	R.M. export surplus.
1932	. . .	1,072,000,000	„ „ „
1933	. . .	668,000,000	„ „ „
1934	. . .	284,000,000	„ import surplus.

Germany's pitiable economic situation caused the inevitable flight of foreign and domestic capital, which reached unprecedented proportions. The Reichsbank gold cover was soon next to nothing.

Things could not go on like this any longer. A last supreme effort had to be made to restore the confidence of the terrified middle-classes.

The old Field-Marshal President's entourage could no longer risk withholding from him the true state of affairs, and was therefore compelled to step aside. General von Schleicher was prevailed upon to form a new Cabinet.

Rightly or wrongly, Schleicher did not—or else could not—see his way to include in his Administration representatives of the *National-Sozialisten*—the "Nazis," as they are popularly called.

He chose, as his trump-suit, the Trade Unions of either Christian, as they called themselves, or of Socialist denominations.

Such were the internal political developments in Germany, as they appeared to me, a detached, and therefore to some extent objective observer, and to most people abroad, of whatever nationality. For the time being, at any rate, the situation seemed to have been saved.

* * * * *

It was somewhat difficult for me personally to steer clear in such troubled waters, the more so as Dr. Bracht had been a

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personal friend of mine for many years, while the Chancellor, von Papen, was the same man who through his rash action and hostile attitude, when Military Attaché in Washington, had done such untold harm to the cause of Germany, and, incidentally, to me personally.

Still, I hold that national interests should rank far above personal feelings, or ill-feelings of any kind. The individual must be able to stand aside, if and when truly great things are at stake.

Nothing was left undone, where my conscience made me feel that something should be done, to drive home to those on whose side I had been fighting throughout the Great War what a spectacle it would be were I to publish my memoirs in an ex-enemy country first.

My kind English publishers had the fullest understanding of how I was torn in half over this grave question, which shadowed practically every move in connection with the publication and the preparatory work.

So it was with their consent that in summer 1932 I once more stretched out my hand towards Berlin with a view to arriving at an understanding which should be first published: *Von Admiralstab bis Zuchthaus*, or *The Dark Invader*.

It surpasses imagination how step by step I was farther and farther carried away from my original aim by the attitude of the very people who should have appreciated my feelings.

First came the never-to-be-forgotten reply, through Herr Doktor Bracht, Papen's Vice-Chancellor, that Papen had given him a flat "No" to my suggestions, adding, "Rintelen is only bluffing."

"Well," I thought, "if he is as short-sighted as that, then let us turn to people who, if only on account of the position they hold, should be more internationally minded."

So I explained the situation to Herr Doktor Albert, who

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was then Manager of the North German Lloyd. It was he who had written, on May 21st, 1928, to the Treasury in Berlin:

> ". . . There can be no doubt that Captain Rintelen, while in America, has been acting with the explicit approval of the then *Oberste Heeres-Leitung*, and that but patriotic motives have been his, something which, in my opinion, must be rated all the higher, as Rintelen must have been fully aware of the risks and dangers involved by his task."

How clearly he now recognised all the possibilities, and all the implications, was apparent in Herr Albert's reply when he was informed that, on being approached by me, Sir Reginald Hall, friendly to me as ever, had at once expressed his willingness to act as mediator.

For a British Admiral to mediate between two Germans, one an ex-Naval Officer, the other a former Secretary of State in the Reich-Chancellor's Office, who now held a civil post of great eminence—that was in truth a portent!

If I had not conducted the correspondence, if I had not carried out this and many other negotiations *myself*, I would relegate such a thing to the realm of the impossible, to the dreamland of fable. And yet it was so!

Herr Albert, let me give him credit for that, at first evidently acted upon his sane comprehension. His letter, dated July 23, said he was indeed very much tempted " to ask Sir Reginald Hall to come over—so much would it interest him to make the acquaintance of such an exceptionally interesting personality as Admiral Hall "!

Upon which I dashed to Waterloo Station, from where I knew Admiral Hall was leaving London that day; it was a fierce, hot, summer afternoon. With magnificent *élan*, this

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fine old gentleman at once grasped the opportunity of straightening out a situation of which he, more than anyone else, appreciated the vital importance for me.

An hour later I had formed a plan of action, which I set forth in detail in a clear and straightforward letter to Herr Albert. My suggestion was that Admiral Hall should embark at Southampton in the S.S. *Bremen*, due to sail on a Thursday for Bremerhaven:—nothing could be more pleasant for him, in view of the heat, or more convenient for Herr Doktor Albert, who was spared both correspondence and journey. Besides, what could be more flattering to the North German Lloyd than to have a British Admiral as a guest on board its most beautiful and most modern vessel? For a serious discussion on a most serious affair those would be the pleasantest surroundings for an old sailor.

The S.S. *Bremen*, leaving port again twenty-four hours later for another journey across the ocean, would then disembark her distinguished passenger off Southampton early on Sunday morning.

This time there could be no miscarriage; after every element of goodwill had been brought to the task by both sides, the goal was in sight, at last.

I posted my letter in the Air Mail box.

No word of reply came.

Who was behind this . . .?

In any case the laurels of rudeness in personal and international relations belong for all time to the General Manager of the North German Lloyd, Herr Doktor Albert.

* * * * *

Time was now pressing if I was—as agreed with my publishers—to come out with the English version of my war-time reminiscences before the year 1932 reached its troubled end.

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However, a last-minute appeal reached me from one to whose opinions and wishes I pay exceptional regard—my daughter Marie-Luise.

She knew that for many years now I was bent upon shaking the dust of an unfriendly soil off my feet, and joining another great, and a more friendly nation; she begged me nevertheless, for her sake, and for the sake of her love for Germany, to make still one more effort to secure that my book be published in the natural, the more logical, the more unequivocal way.

I had a brief discussion with my publishers, where I found ready sympathy for my daughter's sentiments, which after all, down in my heart of hearts, were my own too; Lovat Dickson's answer was straightforward and immediate: "Yes!"

I had met with so much shilly-shallying on the part of Left-Wing people like Ullstein's that I decided this time to apply to a Right-Wing house. I accordingly wrote, under date of September 12, to the publishers of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, a Munich newspaper, which was coming more and more to the fore as the mouth-piece of Nazi philosophy.

I suggested they should publish my war-time memoirs in serial form—along much the same lines as had been proposed in the case of the *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*.

Their reply, dated September 16, and signed by Herr Alfred Rosenberg, the Editor-in-Chief, stated that their space was booked until nearly the end of the year 1932; at the same time, they added, they would like to know whether I should be prepared to write for them a series of articles dealing with the Papen "complex," *i.e.*, as far as his "deeds" as Military Attaché in Washington during the War were concerned.

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Here is the reply:

Munich, September 16, 1932.

DEAR CAPTAIN RINTELEN,

Many thanks for your letter. We have read your outline with interest. Now, as concerns the publication of your book, we can hardly undertake to do it, as our publishing department is at the moment overburdened, and we are entering upon a huge political electioneering campaign. On the other hand, the publication of the whole Papen episode would be of interest, and we should gladly be prepared to publish a pamphlet, signed by you in your own name, on this matter.

Yours sincerely,
(*Signed*) A. ROSENBERG.

As I was not in any wise or in any way interested in Papen as a politician, it required but one minute's consultation with my London publishers to recognise that they too disliked the idea that my war-time reminiscences should be used for political ends, and my reply to the *Völkischer Beobachter* was that we could not allow them "to pick the raisins out of the cake."

Then, on November 2, came a note from the London representative of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, enclosing a letter from Herr Rosenberg which somehow had failed to reach me.

*Chelsea, London, S.W.*3,
November 2, 1932.

DEAR CAPTAIN RINTELEN,

Herr Rosenberg informs me that you have written to him, but that his answer to you, owing to wrong address, was returned to Munich as a dead letter. As you see from the enclosed letter, Herr Rosenberg

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Völkischer Beobachter

Verlag Franz Eher Nachf., G. m. b. H., München

Hauptgeschäftsstelle des Verlags: Thierschstr. 11 Fernruf Sammelnummer 22131 / Schriftleitung: Schellingstr. 39 Fernruf 20801 – 3 u. 20755 – 57 / Postscheckkonto München 11340 / Postsparkasse Wien 79021 / Postscheckkonto Prag 77303 / Postscheckkonto Schweiz: Bern III 7205 / Bank-Konto: Bayer. Hypothekен- und Wechselbank, München, Filiale Kaufingerstraße

Schriftleitung Ro./W.
(Bei der Rückantwort stets angeben)

München, den 3. Oktober 1932
Schellingstraße 39

Herrn
Korvettenkapitän a.D. R i n t e l e n
L o n d o n SW 1
The Royal Automobil Club

Sehr geehrter Herr Kapitän!

Ihr Brief hat mich wegen einer Abwesenheit erst spät erreicht, sodass ich Ihnen erst jetzt noch London schreiben kann. Ich bitte Sie, doch Anfang Oktober sich mit unserem dortigen Vertreter, der jetzt noch in Deutschland, aber am 5. Oktober wieder in London ist, in Beziehung zu setzen und mit ihm das Geeignete zu besprechen. Adresse:

Dr. Thost, London SW 19,
Wimbledon Park.

Für Aufklärung über Herrn von Papen herzlichsten Dank.

Mit deutschem Gruß!

A Rosenberg

LETTER FROM HERR ALFRED ROSENBERG

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requests you to get into communication with me, as London representative of the *Völkischer Beobachter*. I would be extraordinarily pleased to make your early acquaintance.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure. (*Signed*) . . . . . .

Munich, October 3, 1932.

DEAR CAPTAIN RINTELEN,

As I was away, your letter only reached me rather late, so that I am able only now to write to London. I beg you to get in touch with our representative in London. At the moment, he is still in Germany, but will be back in London on October 5th. Will you come to a suitable arrangement with him? His address is . . .

Heartiest thanks for enlightening us in respect to Papen.

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*) A. ROSENBERG.

I met their representative, and discussed the matter with him. He transmitted the gist of the conversation to Munich; but as he seemed not by nature suited for the negotiations required, the following telegram arrived in London:

Munich, November 11, 1932.

Letter dealt with; ask Rintelen to come here.

(*Signed*) HESS.

Now, Herr Hess was, and had been for years, Herr Hitler's private secretary; he and the editor of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the Nazi organ, were naturally in close touch.

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It was just at this time that Papen's tenure of office came to an end, and he was succeeded by Herr von Schleicher. I therefore felt that a visit to Munich was useless, as events had brought about Papen's downfall, and I confidently expected to find the Schleicher Government more reasonable and enlightened.

I wrote to Herr Hess, giving my reasons for not going to Munich in these circumstances.

His reply was as follows:

Munich, November 25, 1932.

DEAR CAPTAIN RINTELEN,

Your letter to hand. I regret that you are not in a position to supply the series of articles contemplated about Papen. Perhaps it will be possible for you to make up for it at a later date.

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*) R. HESS.

What happened " at a later date " is told in a subsequent chapter.

* * * * *

Some time back, a lady who was a personal friend of both General von Schleicher and myself, had written him a letter in which she expressed her disgust over the attitude the Reich had adopted, up till then, in reference to me.

General von Schleicher had replied very sympathetically, saying:

" . . . The gross injustice done to a man of Rintelen's merits must, of course, be set right."

My lady friend sent me this letter, showing what General Schleicher's sentiments were; and when, shortly afterwards,

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Rudolf H e s s .

München, den 25.November 1932.
Löfftzstr.3/III Borstei

Herrn
Kapitän R i n t e l e n ,

56 Cleveland Square W 2
L,o n d o n .

Sehr geehrter Herr Kapitän!

Jhre Briefe erhielt ich. Der letzte vom 21.ds.Mts. ging gestern hier ein. Jch bedaure, dass Sie nicht in der Lage sind, den beabsichtigten Beitrag für die Beurteilung Herrn von Papens zu liefern. Vielleicht ist es Jhnen möglich, dies zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt nachzuholen.

Mit deutschem Gruss
Jhr sehr ergebener

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS
41 3=
TELEGRAMS FOR ALL COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD & RADIOTELEGRAMS FOR SHIPS ON ALL SEAS ARE ACCEPTED AT ALL POSTAL TELEGRAPH OFFICES
1337 MUENCHEN F 5126 13 11 2314=

THOST 41 SWANCOURT CHELSEA LDN S W 3=

BRIEF UEBERHOLT SCHICKT RINTELEN = HESS

LETTER AND TELEGRAM FROM HERR RUDOLF HESS

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he became Reichskanzler, I decided the time had come for me to direct the attention of a responsible statesman to the danger of allowing the short-sighted policy of the Foreign Office in the matter of the American sabotage claims to go on poisoning the relations between Germany and the United States; for the harm done might soon be irreparable.

I therefore wrote to General von Schleicher, reminding him of the kind words he had used in reference to my own person, and explaining further that the injustice he had spoken of was only a minor issue in a matter of grave national importance.

The main object of my letter was to show him into what an impossible situation the Reich Government had brought itself by submitting to the Mixed Claims Commission, through its Agent in America, and therefore endorsing, the sworn statement of Major-General Michelis of the Reichs-Wehr-Ministerium, which contained the—shall I call it—vulnerable assertion, under the date of April 11, 1929:

> "If Admiral Hall has gained the impression, as expressed in his affidavit of April 1928, made when in New York, that Captain Rintelen was chosen for the mission to America in 1915 because of his personal courage, the Admiral is wholly mistaken. This mission did not call for any courage, as it was a purely peaceful mission. No sabotage or the like was ever planned."

In 1915—a "purely peaceful mission," urged upon the *Kriegs-Ministerium* in Berlin by the *Oberste Heeres-Leitung!*

I proceeded to inform General von Schleicher that I had received from Kiel, in October 1922, a letter—which is, no doubt, fresh in my readers' minds—where it was made more than plain that that mission bore "*einen militärisch-politischen Charakter*," and that I was to

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submit, as far as this mission was concerned, "to the American *Penal* Code."

How, I asked his Excellency, can these two statements possibly be brought into harmony? What attitude am I expected to take as a consequence? Was I to fall in with what the highest naval authority had, of its own free will, put down in writing, in 1922, when things were still fresh in everybody's memory, or with the flagrant perjury of a *Reichswehr-General* who himself had taken part in the technical preparations for the task entrusted to me in 1915!

And finally, so I observed, if that mission had *not* required courage, why did not the gallant major-general himself embark for America?

My letter was dated October 2, 1932; the reply was dated October 24, and bore the number No. 483, Za. 1. It consisted, much to my astonishment, of just three lines; it was signed by General von Bredow, Schleicher's right-hand man:

> "Your letter has been referred to the Auswärtige Amt, under the competence of which the subject matter falls."

No one will blame me for the caustic retort:

> "I take note that perjury on the part of a Reichswehr-General also falls under the competence of the Auswärtige Amt. I should have thought the latter sufficiently occupied with the perjuries of its own subordinates, Messrs. Bernstorff, Papen and Hossenfelder."

* * * * *

The end of the story is—that General von Schleicher and General von Bredow are now both "dead."

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CHAPTER XVII

1933

THE *Dark Invader* was now well on its way to being presented to the public—in England first. The date was fixed for the month of January 1933.

But!!!

Under date of January 10, I received an express letter, and found, to my astonishment, that it came from the firm of Ullstein and Company in Berlin.

Would I be inclined to let bygones be bygones and, in spite of all that had happened before, give them the opportunity of publishing my memoirs in the German language first?

Their proposal, so Ullstein's thought, was rendered all the more attractive by the information that—Herr Doktor Levinski was to write the foreword to the German edition!

Herr Levinski! Of all people!

The same man who, as German Agent for the Mixed Claims Commission, had, but a year before, asked the Commission not to take seriously whatever evidence I might give as—"I was completely broken down, mentally and spiritually"!

I had one more consultation over Ullstein's letter with my London publishers, who had given up being astonished, by now:—"There's nothing that could not happen to you—or rather to your memoirs!"

Provided an opportunity presented itself, even if it was at 11.59 p.m. on the evening before publication, they were

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ready to agree that a German officer's War-book belonged to Germany first.

A substantial offer for the acquisition of the copyright accompanied Ullstein's letter, and I accepted their proposition, provided they would begin publication without a further moment's delay, and, as originally planned, in serial form in the *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung*. One *sine qua non* stipulation I had to make, however, and every publisher in the civilised world would not hesitate to approve it: it was that Ullstein's were to refund to the British publishers any expenses they had incurred in connection with the careful and detailed preparation of the book's publication, as the latter now had to stand back for approximately a year.

The figure was a little under £400.

The reply from Berlin was delayed.

At last a long-worded telegram reached me in London. The burden of it was that a figure such as £400 exceeded their budget.

The deal fell through.

* * * * *

Over *four hundred pounds !*

On January 10, Ullstein send their inquiry.

On January 15, I give my conditions.

On January 20, they send their wire—negative.

On January 22, Papen and Hitler meet at a stock-broker's office in Cologne.

On January 24, Schleicher threatens a dissolution of the Reichstag.

On January 26, Papen brings about Schleicher's downfall.

On January 28, Papen advises Hindenburg to call upon Hitler to form a Government.

On January 30, the Nazis come into power.

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In February the Nazis open their campaign against the Jews. Ullstein's were taken over by the new régime.

* * * * *

Papen had held the stirrup to Hitler.

Rintelen's memoirs could not avoid describing Papen's —to put it mildly:—shortcomings during the War.

If the Jewish firm of Ullstein's had published in 1931, as arranged, there would have been no Reichskanzler Papen.

Hitler might have come into power, in any case; how, or when, Destiny alone knows.

But it would certainly not have been " by way of Papen."

The Jewry of the world owes a heavy debt to Ullstein's. . . .

Four hundred pounds!

* * * * *

DER TAG came at last!

The memoirs of the German Naval Intelligence Officer, so long fought over, were now published. In London.

I felt like a school-boy who has won his cricket cap. Had I not reason to be proud after an old hand at the job, A. E. W. Mason, had honoured the apprentice in the field of writing with a superbly worded introduction, adding, from his own knowledge, as he had been on Admiral Hall's staff during the War, as a Major R.M.L.I.:

" For men like Rintelen we can have nothing but respect while the fight is going on and friendship when it is over.

" He only saw his own country again after the lapse of six strenuous and, in part, unhappy years. The main facts as described in this book we are able to check, and we know them to be exact.

" The book is written, as one would expect from his record, without the least rancour, and I think I am not trenching

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upon the province of criticism when I add—with admirable simplicity.

"One cannot, I think, read it without recognising, apart from the magnitude of the things attempted and done, the terrific strain under which he lived; and this gives a moving and human quality to the narrative which sets it a little apart from any other which I have read. Those who are most saturated in spy stories will find much to surprise them in this volume, and they will not be likely to forget the poignant minutes which he spent on the top of an omnibus in London and the way in which those minutes ended.

"The book has other grounds for consideration. It throws a clear light upon the efficiency of the English Intelligence Services. . . .

"For another, it reveals that the jealousies of Departments —which in other countries did so much to hamper the full prosecution of the War—were just as rife in Germany itself, and that the picture of German concentration with which we were all terrifying ourselves in 1914 had no solid foundation in fact.

"Finally, here is as good an argument against War as a man could find in twenty volumes devoted to that subject alone."

* * * * *

A nine-shilling book for that matter!

A few months before, a great lady friend, from whom I had been trying to hide my sentiments, had said to me:—

"I can read you like a penny-book!"

She would never dare rate me so low again!

But, joking apart, I am sincerely grateful to the English Press, and no less to that of the British Empire, the Australian and Canadian Press in particular, which without a single

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exception received *The Dark Invader* with esteem, and even with sympathy.

The reviews of the French, Italian, Scandinavian, and American editions were just as chivalrously disposed,—although in America they read into my criticisms of their "action" against me a hostility which, in fact, I never seriously felt.

In short, a welcome in all ex-enemy countries, where, at any rate, everyone agreed that I had played the game, although, to be sure, I had not flattered them in any way; what I did do—and I am glad I did—was to acknowledge Anglo-Saxon sportsmanship and Franco-Belgian bravery.

From Germany—silence!

Even the *Reichs-Archiv*, entrusted with the recording of the Official War History, and although having among its members mostly former General Staff officers, ignored the "War in America"—upon the order of???

Why not write *soldierly* history?

* * * * *

A few weeks after my book was published, a certain British journalist came across Graf Bernstorff junior, at that time Counsellor of the German Embassy in London, a relation of the former Ambassador in Washington.

The observations Bernstorff junior had seen fit to make were of such a nature, and so malicious in every respect, that his superior in Berlin, Herr Ministerial-Direktor Dr. Dieckhoff, was sent an unmistakably worded note of protest from the author of *The Dark Invader*. Dr. Dieckhoff's reply was correctness itself. His letter, dated February 9, 1933, said:

> ". . . I have informed the Embassy in London and demanded an explanation. . . .
>
> "With kindest regards and with the expression of my sincerest esteem. . . ."

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I received a further note, dated February 17:

> "Following up my letter of February 9, I have the honour of informing you that Count Bernstorff has reported to me that he cannot remember having expressed himself as described in your letter."

Cannot remember! Indeed!

The London journalist insisted: "I *do* remember."

It could not be helped: Herr von Neurath, as the Head of the Department, was in receipt, a few days later, of a renewed protest from me; I added, however, that in spite of the caddish nature of Bernstorff's remarks, a full apology from him would find me conciliatory.

But a few weeks later Herr von Neurath wrote:

> ". . . as Bernstorff reiterates his assertion, I am afraid I personally can do nothing more in the matter."

But the London journalist still insisted he did remember.

Now Bernstorff was covered by diplomatic immunity. The reader may think, therefore, that it was very difficult for me to take any proceedings against him.

Fortunately, my mission to America had been preceded by my studying International Law pretty thoroughly; and this knowledge now stood me in good stead.

I knew that I could not have him served with papers in England while he had a diplomatic post over here, nor even until one year after he had relinquished it. But I also knew that papers could be served on him while he was taking a holiday in his own country, or while he was staying in some third country—for instance, Holland, Belgium, or France.

I therefore notified Bernstorff, through a letter to Herr von Neurath, dated April 10, that if he appeared in any continental Channel port, on his way back to England, after

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the holidays he was then spending in Germany, he would be served papers by my solicitors, who had arranged to have every port watched for him.

In my letter to Herr von Neurath, I went on to say that the trial that would follow would, to my profound regret, not only reveal Bernstorff to have acted like a liar, a calumniator, and, worse still in British eyes, a coward, but would also, inevitably, involve an inquiry into the subject of Bernstorff's remarks.

This inquiry, in turn, would be bound to lead to a number of questions about a certain delicate matter, namely, the American sabotage claims; and my answers, which would, of course, be truthful, would be heard in open court, before a British tribunal,—a thing no German Government, presumably, desired.

Some time later the *Daily Telegraph* published the following paragraphs over the signature of " Peterborough " :

> " Count Albrecht Bernstorff, who was recalled by the Hitler Government from the post of Counsellor to the German Embassy in London, has now been offered a minor Consular appointment in one of our remoter Asiatic dependencies.
>
> " It would not surprise me to learn that he had declined the offer, even if this implied his retirement from the career in which he had rendered such signal services to his country and to Britain.
>
> " The surprising thing is that the Hitler régime, which, both before its accession to power and ever since, has always professed to lay such store on Anglo-German amity, should have elected to deprive that cause of a most effective promoter on the German side.
>
> " Even after his recall from London, Count Bernstorff's

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> British friends had credited his Government with the astute intention of utilising his uncanny understanding of the Anglo-Saxon world and his multiple links of friendship with it. He would have been invaluable either in the Anglo-American Department of the Berlin Foreign Office or the German Embassy at Washington. But this, evidently, is not to be."

The young man in question had himself to blame:—the hand had been stretched out to him!

There the matter would have remained had it not been for a slip of Herr von Neurath's. I had done my best to make sure that my correspondence with the Auswärtige Amt was private and confidential. But Berlin allowed the matter to become one of official Embassy routine business; Herr von Neurath's last letter, and my final reply, therefore, passed through several hands.

Newspaper reporters, anxious to learn why exactly Count Bernstorff had left London, pestered me with questions; no word to them on the subject ever passed my lips.

But the contents of Herr von Neurath's "open" letter soon made the round of London. Berlin have but themselves to thank if the actual reason for Bernstorff's recall became so widely known.

* * * * *

Thus my countrymen. What of my "foes"?

On Wednesday May 3, 1933, a member of the House of Lords had this Notice on the Paper:

> "To ask His Majesty's Government if Captain von Rintelen should be permitted to reside in this country."

On behalf of the Home Secretary, the Earl of Lucan

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replied that, "after making special inquiries, the Home Secretary has no reason to believe that the presence of Captain von Rintelen here is in any way detrimental to the interests of this country . . .", and continuing said: "I should think he was working all he knew for his country during the War, and I do not think I should blame him for that."

On a Division on the Motion their Lordships, by an overwhelming majority, showed themselves kindly disposed with regard to my stay in England, and I shall ever be grateful to those of their Lordships who, doubtless because they knew me better, voted in my favour; in particular I should like to thank the Earl of Lucan, Viscount Hailsham, Lord Darling, and Lord Newton.

Lord Newton, who during the War had dealt with the difficult problem of war-prisoners, and was thus well versed in my case, graciously declared:

> ". . . He was a war-prisoner at the camp at Donington Hall; but when America came into the War, the American Government demanded that he should be handed over to them. . . . I had something to do with this matter myself, and I do not feel absolutely certain in my own mind that we did the right thing. But, anyhow, we handed Captain von Rintelen over to the Americans, and he served several years' penal servitude in an American penitentiary."

The Army, Navy, and Air Force Gazette took a soldier's view of the question, and presented my case in the following fashion:

> ". . . It would be interesting to know what the noble lord's reaction would have been had it been suggested

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to him that he should proceed to, let us say, Turkey, before it entered the War, to carry out a task similar to that which von Rintelen carried out in America, and that on his success depended the fate of his country. Would he not have looked upon this as an almost superhuman task, both in difficulty and in danger? And let us further imagine that he had carried out his task successfully and, because of his very success, been forced to languish in prison-camp and gaol and become a marked man throughout the world, would he consider himself so unworthy, as compared with his fellow subjects, as to be deprived of the privileges accorded them abroad? For it is the deprivation of such privileges that he demanded in the case of von Rintelen. . . .

". . . This (the Earl of Lucan's reply) was a wise and sympathetic answer. Had it been otherwise, the Government would have been guilty of a breach of a great principle of international justice. Had von Rintelen done less, or dared less, he might have remained undiscovered and to-day would have been living in tranquillity in any country."

Lastly, I received, some time later, a letter from a certain personage, well known in parliamentary circles:

" I am glad the House of Lords has voted in favour of your stay in this country. Germany's loss is England's gain."

I shall do my best to make this generous verdict true.

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CHAPTER XVIII

IN the spring of 1933, after a good many questions had been asked, the Albert Langen-Georg Müller-Verlag in Munich finally acquired the German rights for the publication of *The Dark Invader*; it was stipulated, incidentally, that the original title *Von Admiralstab bis Zuchthaus*, should be retained.

At last!

A substantial sum was agreed upon, and, what counted much more in my eyes, the publication was to take place immediately after the re-translation into German was finished. Furthermore, for the re-translation, the *Verlag* turned to the man who could best interpret the thoughts, feelings and actions of the author—namely, the author himself.

This time it was not by the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens, but by rising and falling waves of the Channel coast, that one might see a middle-aged man with knitted brows struggling to dominate a mountain of foolscap. Every wave brought an inspiration,—and every gust of wind a wild flutter, a scramble to catch the escaping papers. There I sat, laboriously changing and re-changing words and phrases from English into German, armed with red, blue, and green pencils, and a large india-rubber. Thus I strove to present my story to my own nation.

With what fresh enthusiasm I envisaged the prospect that—better late than never—those for whom I had fought during the War, and for whose benefit I had made the sacrifices I did make, would now at last learn what *had* happened in

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America in 1915, a knowledge which wise censorship had withheld from them during the War, and unwise statesmanship ever since.

All my energy, all my heart was in the work, and my striving was all the more intense because I knew that Marie-Luise would have the satisfaction of seeing that what *her* father had done for King and Country, was put down in black and white, clear for every German to read, and truthful to the last dot.

Her letters gave me an additional impetus to make a good job of the task allotted to me by one of Germany's great publishing houses.

Punctual to the minute, and section by section, the re-translation made its metamorphosis from my scribble—the nightmare of so many of my correspondents, excepting always those who are guided by the eye of love,—into a typescript legible to any eye; and in that form it made its way to the Verlag in Munich.

And the more the men at the Verlag read of the manuscript, the more astonished they became—and perplexed besides. Of such things, such occurrences, they had never heard!

Many months later I was to learn that with their increasing bewilderment there came a feeling of uneasiness that grew and grew.

How, they asked themselves, is it possible that such knowledge has been kept from a whole nation? Who has been responsible for such a short-sighted policy?

A whole correspondence between Munich and Berlin, and between Munich and London. . . .

Finally, on October 16, the following telegram reached me, after having travelled exactly twenty-two minutes from house to house:

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[URGENT.]

Munich. No. 5903.

We urgently request your presence for important discussion here; in any case, before your journey to London and completion of film. Stop. Wire ahead when you will arrive here.

(*Signed*) ALBERT LANGEN-GEORG MÜLLER-VERLAG.

Beyond any possible doubt, the directors of the Verlag were sincere; and they were patriotic enough to wish to set matters right, and so serve the German cause.

I decided, in spite of the "urgency" of their request, reiterated in a letter of October 17, to visit my publishers in London before proceeding to Munich; for after all, it was *they* who had signed the contract with the Verlag.

It was agreed I should be the one to go. For, remembering the telegram which had been sent to London less than a year before, by Herr Hess, now the deputy of the Reichskanzler, we felt certain that literary matters would not form the only, nor indeed the principal, topic of the conversations in Munich.

For a discussion of the political aspect of the publication of my book in Germany, I was obviously the man to go.

Besides, I felt this would be an excellent opportunity for letting these Munich people understand how sadly mistaken they were if they assumed that there was one word in my book which did not tally with the facts.

* * * * *

At this point I must introduce an amusing story.

My bags were all packed, when I received an express letter from my London solicitors, Messrs. Westbury, Preston and Stavridi:

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"The 'Actress Case' will be heard in the King's Bench Division to-morrow morning at ten o'clock."

The issue in this case was: had I, or had I not, allowed myself to get into an entanglement while on duty in war-time?

A young English author, in a book which purported to describe startling war-time episodes, had honoured me by devoting a whole chapter of his book to my "mission" to America. He began in a complimentary fashion by calling me "one of Britain's most important captures during the War." But he then went on to say: ". . . When his ship reached Southampton, Scotland Yard detectives found him in his cabin in the company of a well-known West-End actress."

My ship never called at Southampton.

I was not found by Scotland Yard detectives.

No actress—indeed no woman, of any sort—was with me in my cabin.

Six months or more had been spent in correspondence and argumentation between solicitors as to whether these statements were libellous.

The publishers at once realised, and admitted, that they were, and neither publisher nor author ever cast any doubts on my assertion that this little actress, however delightful reading the tale of the *rencontre* might make, was herself the princess charming of a fairy-tale,—at least so far as my life was concerned.

Not that I am, or have ever pretended that I am, an enemy of the other sex. The world would have laughed if I, of all men, had made myself out to be a saint.

But in August 1915 I was on duty—to report back in Berlin, and to reach my destination safe and sound.

On duty—that was the point.

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The young English author, at long last, was made to recognise this distinction.

An officer does not claim damages in such a case: honour cannot be vindicated by pounds sterling.

Both the author and the publisher made a full retraction and a complete disclaimer, in open court, before a distinguished Judge of the King's Bench, offered the most ample apology, and expressed their sincere regret.

A few days later, the publishers sent me a personal letter couched in the kindest and most generous terms, and, with it, a beautiful diamond wrist-watch for Marie-Luise, a souvenir of the chivalry a British publisher knows how to show in dealing with a former enemy.

One difficulty still seemed to trouble the inquisitive: "Granted this story is a pure phantasy, how did it ever arise?" It was indeed puzzling to find a German officer and a West-End actress united during the War—even if it was only in print.

That is easily answered. It was a case of mistaken identity.

When our familiar friend, Captain Papen, the German Military Attaché in Washington in 1915, was requested by the American Government to leave the territory of the United States, he no doubt felt that a voyage so inauspiciously begun would need some livening up.

So he arranged for his cabin, on the S.S. *Noordam*, to be near to that of a certain West-End actress of his acquaintance; and this West-End actress, of Jewish extraction—*horribile dictu*, was none other than the alleged subject of my lawsuit.

The idyll that followed was unfortunately spoiled by British Control Officers, who considered that our Leander's "safe conduct" covered only his person, and not the trunks in his cabin.

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As the latter shared their owners' propinquity, the Control Officers decided that "hers" as well as "his" should be forwarded to London for examination; and forwarded they were, despite the protests of the Attaché and the tears of the "attachée."

What followed officially from this examination is known to the world already.

What followed unofficially I shall now disclose.

Some time afterwards, a certain neutral diplomat, acting on behalf of the former Attaché, inquired whether the contents of the trunks might not be returned to their rightful owners.

The following departmental correspondence ensued:

MY DEAR SIR A.,

As far as we are concerned, we see no objection. Do you? (*Signed*) B.

MY DEAR SIR B.,

Letters of a documentary nature, we keep. Letters of a private nature, we burn. Letters of a French nature—there are several left—remain at his, or her, disposal. (*Signed*) A.

War-time has its humours after all!

* * * * *

Now—off to Munich!

I was welcomed with complimentary words all round:—The papers down there were still blazing forth their praise of such British justice towards a former enemy.

The first thing I was asked when I called at the Albert Langen-Verlag was:

"Are you already naturalised in England, now that the House of Lords has voted so overwhelmingly in your favour?"

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"No: not yet. My application is still under consideration by the British Authorities."

"Oh! All the better! We are instructed by Government circles to try to persuade you to remain a German citizen."

"Why that? Never too late to mend!"

"Then there still is a basis for negotiating with you to undo the wrong that has been done you?"

"Certainly; but on whose instructions are you speaking to me?"

"You will see that if you will stay till to-morrow. The Chancellor's deputy, Herr Hess, is very keen to have a real heart-to-heart talk with you."

"Very well; I shall wait. I am putting three days in all at your disposal."

"Herr Hess will come to-morrow from Berlin to meet you."

How could I have refused the hand which, it seemed, was at last being stretched out to me—even if it was nearly fifteen years after my return from America?

I waited.

There were lots of mysterious telephone calls from the Verlag to the Brown House, from the Brown House to Berlin, and back. Over and over again I was assured that it was all being arranged, that it was quite settled . . . really.

Was the Government in earnest?

The Managing Director of the Verlag said: "Yes, he could answer for that."

* * * * *

"Herr Hess tenders his apologies: he is unexpectedly prevented from coming personally. Would you be willing to discuss the whole affair with his understudy?"

"Yes, if it must be so: but please, no more shilly-shally."

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"Oh no, Herr Kapitän! We *mean* to set things right this time."

"All right then; carry on."

More telephone calls to and fro: the same as before.

"Will you have luncheon with Herr Hess's envoy?"—"Yes."

"Herr X is sorry to put you off, but will you have dinner with him instead?"—"Yes."

"Herr X is sorry to put you off once more. Will you have breakfast with him to-morrow morning?"—"Yes."

"Herr X is very sorry to put you off yet again. Will you have lun. . . ."—"No. Thanks very much. If by 10 a.m. to-day I have not been given a definite appointment for a full discussion, I shall leave Munich by the day-express."

This kind of evasion and procrastination had been going on with me for fifteen years: each time, the other party, though ashamed of the disgrace it brought upon the Reich, had backed out at the last minute. Some sinister influence . . . but whence? Whose? Who was, who is there so all-powerful?

At the Verlag, they assured me they were *not* dependent on Papen: "Papen, of all men!"

"Well, we'll see!"

* * * * *

At a quarter to ten, a powerful motor-car pulled up outside the Verlag's offices.

The curtain was rising?

A well-meaning, but wholly uninformed young official introduced himself, with much ceremony.

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"The end sanctifies the means," I thought, to console myself; I did not move so much as an eyelash in response.

"Would you mind, Herr Kapitän, telling me everything that has happened since 1915? Herr Hess lays great stress upon knowing *all* the details—and especially to what extent Papen's attitude has been damaging to the interests of the Reich. I have been authorised, and instructed, to act on his behalf."

"Gawd!"

For six long hours I recounted the occurrences of those fifteen years.

The poor young official gasped. He could hardly trust his own ears. He just sat and stared; so did the other witnesses present.

"My life is just beginning. You needn't sit there gaping. I'm not a bit astonished. I am used to it. Fifteen years' warfare is nothing. If it must be, I shall make it a 'Thirty Years' War'—and I shall win."

"No, no, Herr Kapitän; this time the Reich Government *will* put matters right. We have a new régime in Germany now."

"Régime—agreed. But what about the personnel?"

"One or two may have been kept on."

"That's just it; and I don't think it makes quite a—*reassuring* impression."

"Oh! But, Herr Kapitän, Papen counts for nothing."

My reply:

"Well, I am glad that you realise at last you have kept me long enough in your boat. Do you seriously imagine that the war-time Allies, or the League of Nations' Council if you prefer, would have ever granted Germany *Gleichberechtigung?* . . . Only since a man of substance like Schleicher had become Chancellor and had this Papen thrown out of

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office, did our former enemies, on December 11th, 1932, if my memory serves me right, make this fundamental concession! That should show you what public opinion abroad thought of the lunacy of this Papen régime. . . ."

"Unfit for Staff Duty!" But how much more unfit for *Gleichberechtigung*!

Turning to the Manager of the Verlag, I added: "My train leaves to-night; my London address you know; now what about the publication of my book in Germany?"

"Oh, that will forge ahead."

"According to plan?"

"According to plan."

The Manager and Herr Hess's envoy both failed to see the point of my remark: the one was too humourless, the other too young. However, that did not matter to me, provided they were good business men, and kept their promises.

I was about to take my leave, when Herr Hess's envoy cut in with:

"By the way, before I forget, Herr Kapitän:—now that you are willing to agree to a peaceful settlement, how do you think the Reich Government could best compensate you for . . .?"

"I do not wish to be *compensated*," I said, interrupting him. . . . "A 'compensation' cannot satisfy an active man. As I said, my life is just beginning. I had much rather have the satisfaction of being given an opportunity of making myself useful to Germany."

"But you have been away from Germany for so long. . . ."

"Yes . . . the post of Minister in Brussels is still vacant . . . and I know that I shall be welcome in Belgium. If a Papen can become Chancellor, then Rintelen is a hundred times more fit to be given a Minister's post!"

* * * * *

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I left Munich wondering: "Will they act, or will they not?"

I got back to London, and shortly after my arrival received this letter:

Munich, November 4, 1933.

DEAR SIR,

To-day we are able to inform you, to our great satisfaction, that the prospects of getting your book filmed through a German company are extraordinarily favourable, and that we have good grounds for being quite confident that here something will come to pass with which you can be satisfied. We would therefore urgently request you not to proceed further with the foreign film company with which you entered into negotiations.

In view of what we have already achieved to-day in this direction, we can tell you, with some certainty, that our firm would be well in the position to take over the universal film rights of your book; and we should be grateful to you, if you would oblige by telling us at once for what sum you would be ready to transfer these universal film rights to us.

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*) ALBERT LANGEN-GEORG MÜLLER-VERLAG.

I could hardly expect better news. It only remained for me to wait until I should receive definite confirmation about the film rights, and, more important still, the publication of the book itself.

So I waited.

On November 20, I wrote to Munich asking whether they were yet in a position to give me some indication that

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all was going according to my wishes. Would the Verlag trouble to keep to the date of publication as arranged? When would the agreement be confirmed by a written contract?

The answer, dated November 22, seemed reassuring and positive enough.

Munich, November 22, 1933.

DEAR SIR,

In the last hour before my departure for Berlin, I am able to answer your letter of yesterday with some still more positive information. It will certainly be a disappointment for you that a prolongation of the term beyond the 26th of November, the date agreed upon here, is unavoidable, because, in spite of the best will in the world, matters cannot be settled so quickly.

However, this disappointment will, I hope, be outweighed by the *certainty*, which you may from now on feel, that efforts are being made in all earnestness, and with every possible haste, to achieve a solution of those questions which are now in the balance—a solution which will put an end to your insecurity and to the painful and embarrassing situation in which you find yourself.

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*) .....

Managing Director.

But the first fortnight of December was soon almost gone, and the chances that the book would be ready for the famous Christmas market, be it only in the form of advance serials in one of the great Munich papers, were fast slipping away.

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I was filled with misgivings. Misgivings quickly gave way to doubts, and doubts to apprehension, which was shared by my London publishers.

We demanded a straightforward reply.

This is what we got from the Verlag.

Munich, December 12, 1933.

DEAR SIR,

The negotiations conducted by me with the object of concluding an agreement in Germany in the place of the agreement, which you mentioned to us as possible and pending, with an American film company, are, alas! not proceeding as well as the state of affairs had led me to hope. Rather, I am even obliged to reckon on their falling through in the end, and on that account I must inform you to-day that I ought no longer to maintain you in hopes of a quick and favourable decision.

I take it that you will now decide in the manner which your personal needs dictate. But I, for my part, as head of the largest literary publishing firm in Germany, must, now as ever, not allow myself to be swayed in my decisions by personal or business considerations. I have also to ask myself, as in the case of every other publication, whether the appearance of a German edition of your book, be it in its present or in an altered form, is necessary or useful—or not. As I, at the present moment, cannot believe in such necessity or such usefulness, our firm has postponed the publication until the future—at the risk that, owing to circumstances, it may forgo the publication rights through the expiry of the term for an amicable option. Lovat Dickson will receive this information by a letter of even date.

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I imagine you know, without my expressly repeating this assurance, how very sorry I am that, within the comparatively short delay imposed upon you by the circumstances, the hopes which I personally cherished and believed I could let you hold, have not proved realisable.

There only remains for me to thank you for the trust you put in me, and to close with the sincere wish that it may be possible for you to find some tolerable issue from the painful situation that has arisen.

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*) .....

Managing Director.

The reply wasn't straightforward; but one thing was quite clear: it was useless now for me to look forward any more to a jubilant Christmas with the boyish delight of one who knows what is in store for him, but hopes it may be even more splendid than his fancies.

I went off for a quiet week-end in the country. On my return, I found a thick envelope from the Verlag. It was December 23. Good news is shortly told; there was *no* good news here.

Munich, December 21, 1933.

DEAR SIR,

I am very sorry to learn from your letter of the 16th December that already before my last letter you had as good as lost your confidence in the final success of my efforts. There was actually no foundation for this loss of confidence. On the contrary, I beg you not to doubt for one moment that not only myself, but all those with whom I had any dealings in this

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affair, worked sincerely and honestly to bring about a real improvement in relation to the present situation. Above all, you would do a bitter injustice to the Staff of the National Socialist Party if you were to assume that they contributed, whether actively or passively, to the frustration of my efforts. Perhaps, in spite of the momentary failure, the future will yet bring proof of this.

But to retain the book would, I agree with you, be an injustice. Already, when writing my last letter, I doubted whether I should release it for you at once. But 3,459 marks—so far spent on preparatory work—is a good deal of money for a literary publishing firm; besides, I would not give up yet the thought of publishing your book at a later date. But as you have now asked me, I, in the hope of being able to indemnify yourself at least to some extent for the financial losses which you have incurred owing to the long duration of the negotiations with me, am willing to grant your request at once and right gladly. The firm of Lovat Dickson is being sent a similar communication by the same post (copy enclosed). But I am not returning the two German manuscripts. *Something*—I hope it is also in accordance with your wishes—must remain with our firm, even though it be only a "voucher" and a "souvenir."

I repeat the closing wishes of my last letter, and remain,

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*).....

Managing Director.

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Munich, December 21, 1933.

LOVAT DICKSON LIMITED,
LONDON

DEAR SIRS,

By letter of December 16th, Captain Rintelen requests us to renounce the publishing rights of his book *The Dark Invader* in the German version. We have made up our minds to grant this wish, and hereby relinquish all rights which we obtained through the contract of May 8, 1933; in return for which we declare ourselves absolved from all the obligations undertaken. We also renounce any claim to the refunding of the payments advanced by us in the same connection, amounting to 3,459 marks.

Yours faithfully,
ALBERT LANGEN-GEORG MULLER-VERLAG.

So the régime was explicitly absolved.

Who, then, are the sinister forces? Are there, in Germany, two régimes side by side? Does the right hand not wish to know what the left hand does? It seems an odd conception of " unity of command " !

Someone is cracking the whip out there. Yesterday, and again to-day . . . perhaps again to-morrow.

The Verlag had made a " heavy sacrifice " ; it was " a lot of money " ; and they had made it " right gladly." Perhaps they had received " reparations " from some source. Was the source public—or can it have been a private one?

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CHAPTER XIX

1934

THE year had hardly begun when a well-known Berlin journalist visited me in London to find out what attitude I would take up in regard to the sabotage cases.

"No one in Berlin can understand why you should have broken off negotiations over the publication of your book. The German public is very keen to learn what actually did happen in America during the War."

"Well, I'm——!"

Once more I stood before the enigma. For the thousandth time I saw Germany as a book sealed with seven seals.

It was a hopeless task trying to show this man *all* the insanity that had been going on in German Government circles since the War. He spent days with me in London, making copies, and taking down extracts from the letters exchanged between me and Berlin.

There it all was in black and white. The poor journalist's eyes opened wider and wider. . . .

* * * * *

It was about this time that Berlin, as uninformed about the relationship between author and publisher as about a good many other topics, chose to scold *me* for having "allowed" Messrs. Lovat Dickson Limited to publish an English version of Professor Banse's book "*Raum und Volk im Weltkrieg*"—*Germany, Prepare for War!*—as the English version was called, which had created a considerable stir over here, containing as it did maps and plans for an invasion of England. . . .

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Once more, Berlin was trying to use as a scapegoat the man who—let us say—had not "deserted" his country in taking over the "Manhattan Front," and who was considered a "culprit" for having done so.

A day or two before the book was published in this country, the German Embassy, doubtless prompted by Berlin, came out with the ponderous statement that Professor Banse's writings were of no significance, as the Professor no longer held any official position.

Strange to relate, we found, months later, on the title-page of a subsequent edition of the German book, that he still signed himself:

Professor für Wehrwissenschaft an der Technischen Hochschule in Braunschweig.

Not *ex*-Professor, but Professor!

I sighed. . . .

Poor Embassy! Why is it always so unfortunate in its *démentis*?

* * * * *

Things were soon lively in Berlin, for Hauptmann von Bose had taken the matter up, and into his own hands.

Herr von Bose was the resolute man who, in the darkest hours of German defeat and revolution, with the exceptional presence of mind and the magnificent initiative I have described, "cheated" the Allies out of the coveted secret archives.

He was now Principal Secretary in the Vice-Chancellor's office.

Keeping in mind who the Vice-Chancellor was, one might call Bose the "righting" man in the "wronging" place.

The Berlin emissary I have just spoken of, on his return from London, had found his way into Herr von Bose's

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presence; and Bose, after hearing what he had to say, immediately went and saw his superior, to suggest the sabotage claims should be settled on the lines I had been urging for years.

When Bose went to see a man. . . .

Yet—my daughter Marie-Luise was told by Papen's son, at a dance, that his father had instructed him to give her the message that *he* preferred " not to open the case again."

With a smart *riposte*, Marie-Luise replied quietly:

" Your father need not trouble himself about that; mine will see to it."

After this incident had come to his knowledge, Herr von Bose paid a visit to Marie-Luise. He meant to have another try.

But it was no use. . . .

By midnight of June 30, Herr von Bose was " dead."

* * * * *

There were still two schools of thought in Berlin, at variance with one another, on the question of how to deal with the Rintelen case.

Throughout, there had been the school which clung tenaciously to the idea that a " distortion of facts "—which my readers will agree is a mild expression—and a description of me as " a man tottering to his grave " (tottering!), were all that was needed to extricate Germany—and themselves—from a tight corner.

The school of thought, more reasonable, and more realist, and, above all, more gentlemanly, felt that there must be something wrong in such a course, even if it did seem at first sight profitable; that such a gross breach of loyalty towards one who had shown such mettle was unbecoming to a great nation.

* * * * *

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The first school counted among its exponents a man who was now sent from Berlin to look me up in London, and who talked sense all right when it came to the purely domestic affairs of his country. But—"what a mind was there o'erthrown" when it came to the affairs of Great Britain, or, worse still, the British Empire!

"You'll see; before long that Empire is going to collapse.

"Look at its half-hearted, compromising attitude all the world over; watch the men who are guiding Britain's destinies; see how little the Englishman knows and cares about politics.

"They talk about nothing and know about nothing except sport. Simply childish! It's the surest sign of incurable 'pacifism.'

"A nation like that is surely on the road to decay.

"Besides, what are they doing for the unemployed? Instead of sending them all to the Colonies . . ."

"Yes," I reminded my visitor, "you are *of course* right, but there is a difference between Crown Colonies, Mandated Territories, and Self-Governing Dominions. Didn't you know that? It's not merely a matter of taking a few ships, putting so many people on board and sending them to Oceania or what not. The unemployment question is not as easily settled as that!"

"Why not?" he objected. "What of the tens of thousands who go to every football match? That's how they waste their 'dole,' as they call it."

"But isn't that proof of a healthy mind—people of humble station in life finding it more natural to go to a football match than to get drunk, so to speak, on politics, or to play at soldiers? Don't you make any mistake there. Granted, the Territorial Establishment figures *are* unsatis-

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factory: but that football crowd is made up of the same type of man that Kitchener's 'mob' consisted of—and didn't that 'mob' know how to fight? What you've just been saying reminds me of what I heard, a year or so before the Great War, from the lips of a member of the Embassy in London: that no sooner had hostilities broken out, than there would be a revolution in England and Ireland, the Colonies would break away—et cetera, et cetera; and what did happen?"

I left it at that. My interlocutor from Berlin knew better!

* * * * *

That conversation recalled to my mind a letter from a Berlin dignitary six months or so earlier.

I had been asked to express an opinion on some point of British policy—which I did to the best of my knowledge, giving my reasons in full detail.

As a kind of post-scriptum to my letter, I had said: "If at any time you should want information on some other topic concerning Great Britain, I shall be very glad to put my experience, such as it is, at your disposal."

The laconic reply to this P.S. was:

"*England-Kenner haben wir genug.*" ("Experts on England we have in plenty.")

Developments have fully confirmed this.

* * * * *

It was in Belgian territory, on the delightful shores of that friendly country, that—once more!—I was visited by an emissary from Berlin.

August had just begun. Around me my Ghent friends.

The emissary had been sent by the "other" school to find out whether there was any possibility of "making peace"

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with me, and satisfying me without the Reich having to disavow its former statements; also, whether I would lend a hand in helping to disentangle the mess—for those confounded sabotage cases had once more come up for discussion!

I replied that of course I would be the first to help—by all the means at my disposal. Was I not, after all, at least as capable of statesmanship and diplomatic tact as Bernstorff senior and Papen senior put together? It required but a clear indication of decency and fair-mindedness on the part of the Reich, and the Americans would, I was convinced, respond with true Anglo-Saxon spirit, and, like the sportsmen they were, let bygones be bygones, but otherwise, Berlin was courting disaster.

My interlocutor seemed almost too ready to accept what I said; but I intended he should be convinced beyond the possibility of a relapse.

I wanted him to satisfy both himself and those who had sent him that I, Rintelen, had reasoned objectively; and I wished him to discover for himself whether my opinion was really shared by those in England who were versed in the situation, and therefore should know.

I therefore suggested he should visit Sir Reginald Hall.

What—Sir Reginald Hall?

The Embassy in London, so he assured me, had, on a former occasion, made exhaustive "inquiries" about Sir Reginald Hall, and had reported to Berlin that the "above named was a wholly unimportant person, whose opinions carried no weight."

The inquiries must indeed have been exhaustive to result in so sententious a report!

This estimate is worth comparing with what Ambassador Page wrote to President Wilson during the War, in con-

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nection with the intercepting—for which Admiral Hall was mainly responsible—of the famous Zimmermann telegram trying to embroil Mexico and the United States.

London, March 17, 1917.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

. . . Hall is one genius that the War has developed. Neither in fiction nor in fact can you find any such man to match him. Of the wonderful things that I know he has done, there are several that it would take an exciting volume to tell. The man is a genius—a clear case of genius. All other secret-service men are amateurs by comparison. If there be any life left me after this War, and if Hall's abnormal activity and ingenuity have not caused him to be translated, I wish to spend a week with him in some quiet place and then spend a year in writing out what he will have told me. That's the shortest cut to immortality for him and for me that has yet occurred to me. I shall never meet another man like him: that were too much to expect.

And (whether it becomes me to say so or not) our Secretary Bell and I have his complete confidence.

Hall can look through you and see the very muscular movements of your immortal soul while he is talking to you. Such eyes as the man has! My Lord!

I do study these men here most diligently who have this vast and appalling War-Job. There are most uncommon creatures among them—men about whom our great-grandchildren will read in their school histories; but, of them all, the most extraordinary is this naval officer—of whom, probably, they'll never hear. He locks up certain documents 'not to be

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opened till twenty years after this date.' I've made up my mind to live twenty years more. I shall be present at the opening of that safe . . .

Yours heartily,

(*Signed*) WALTER H. PAGE.

It may be argued that, on this and other matters, Admiral Hall had presumably not taken the German Government into his confidence!

But, even granting that excuse, the Embassy had other means of knowing that Sir Reginald Hall was not "insignificant," as this second letter from Ambassador Page shows:

American Embassy, London.

October 24, 1917.

DEAR SIR REGINALD,

I have waited, perhaps ungracefully, to send you my congratulations on your K.C.M.G., because, once having you in range, I wished to take a double shot at you. I am sincerely glad, not only at this honour done you because you have so richly deserved it, but also because it was bestowed on you not in a long list of other honours, but all by itself on you alone. I think I see in this unusual fact a special significance. None of your many friends rejoices more truly than we who dwell and labor at the sign of this Embassy, which is most grateful to you.

And now I have the additional pleasure, under instructions sent to me directly by the President, to convey his personal thanks to you. I quote from his letter:

"You will at an early time take some private occasion to assure Admiral Hall of my very great appre-

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ciation of what he has done and of the spirit in which he has done it."

May I add an expression of my great personal gratification at being instructed to convey this message to you?

I am,
Yours most sincerely,
(*Signed*) WALTER H. PAGE.

Poor Page! What an irony of fate that *I* should live to read these letters, and that *he* should now be dead!

* * * * *

Berlin's emissary was finally "persuaded" to interview Sir Reginald Hall, and I had the pleasure of seeing him safely embarked on the Ostend–Dover boat.

Now, fortunately, there were in Berlin people who had better sources of information than Carlton House Terrace. The upshot of the emissary's journey to England was more than surprising; he went a good deal further than I had anticipated.

Hawk's Lease, Lyndhurst.
August 19, 1934.

MY DEAR RINTELEN,

So glad to get your post-card. I was beginning to think that Germany had absorbed you!

I had a call yesterday from ——. He told me that he was acting on behalf of Herr Hitler, and wanted to know how the possibility of your being appointed Ambassador in London would be viewed.

I, of course, could not say anything which might be taken as official, as the matter is one entirely for the

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Foreign Office. I could say that you had quite a large and useful circle of friends over here, and that you were already well known. I don't think I ought to have said more, and I did not want to say less. I am wondering whether anything will come of it. Had you been in London, I would have rung you up at once to find out, but being entirely in the dark, I had—like you—to exercise caution.

Anyhow, there is the incident as it occurred, and I have wasted no time in letting you know. This must catch the post, so no more at present.

Yours sincerely,

(*Signed*) W. R. HALL.

Nothing further was heard of this Ambassadorship. I think my imagination does not mislead me when I see before my eyes a rider neatly attached to the document by someone in the Auswärtige Amt, and suggesting that Rintelen must first sign that he "does not remember what happened in 1915." Of course, those in Berlin, who knew me a bit better, realised beforehand that no such rider would ever receive my signature, and consequently the condition *sine qua non* would never be fulfilled.

Neither was anything more heard about a reasonable settlement of the sabotage claims. Let them be the nightmare of those who mismanaged them. I have done my best.

All and sundry in Berlin know that; so many civilians, and soldiers besides, from the aged Generaloberst von Litzmann to the young Generalmajor von Reichenau,—I have warned them all.

Neither did Carlton House Terrace rise to the occasion:—the young man who, for the sake of his name, had been

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FÜRST BISMARCK

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attached to the Embassy, Prince Bismarck, and who, upon the advice of personal and mutual friends, was entrusted with the task of driving the matter home in highest quarters in Berlin, sadly failed to realise that the interests of *his country* were, and are, at stake.

The Iron Chancellor, were he still with us, would scornfully reprimand his grandson . . . he would frown upon the whole unclean business!

A high American official wrote to me but a few months ago:

> "The failure of Germany to get the remainder of the sequestration money is entirely due to their own attitude in the sabotage cases. Nothing that you did had anything to do with it. They may whistle for a very long time before they get anything out of America, and had better not budget for it."

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CHAPTER XX

1935

ONE day, towards the end of January, Admiral Hall told me that inquiries had been made of him about the sabotage cases, and the possibility of a compromise.

Yet, Berlin had just before informed me most authoritatively that there was no thought of any such thing.

The Americans, it seems, are more stubborn than even I had expected them to be.

Let's wait and see. I'm not worrying!

Berlin certainly knows best.

* * * * *

March and April have brought me—twenty years after, almost to the day—the satisfaction of hearing my 1915 mission justified by the Government it attacked—that of the United States of America.

Whereas in 1915 the only defence I could put forward for my forceful action was the principle that the end *sanctifies* the means, I can now claim that, on the present Administration's own admission, the attitude of the Wilson Administration, during the War, showed a very one-sided neutrality.

I thank President Roosevelt and the American Senate for coming round so nicely to the Imperial Government's point of view. *Now* the order of the day in America is:

"Take the profits out of the War," and a Neutrality Act has been passed by Congress.

Alas, twenty years too late!

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Once more I shall turn to Ambassador Page's letters. A few weeks before America finally declared war on Germany he wrote to President Wilson:

> "We must enter the War, if only to stave off the . . . imminent danger of the collapse of J. P. Morgan and Company, who have carried the financial burdens of ourselves as well as of our friends in Britain and in France."

* * * * *

What had been the subject of a two hours' debate in the House of Lords two years previously—namely, the question whether or not I should become a British citizen—now entered an acute, and possibly its final, stage.

Admiral Hall, no doubt acting on behalf of those in authority, sent me a wire, one morning, to meet him at Waterloo Station.

After I had arrived, and we had found a couple of seats, he had a few quiet words with the guard,—after which our compartment was locked.

"Are we back in August 1915?" I asked.

It was almost exactly the scene at St. Pancras Station in 1915, as I left, under military escort, for Donington Hall:—the same quiet words to the guard, the same expectation of the unknown, the same absence of conversation, and the same click of the lock.

That was what had just switched it all on in my mind.

No sooner had the train pulled out of the station, than Admiral Hall took on a slightly ceremonial attitude and then shot out the question:

"Tell me, Rintelen, how would you act supposing England were involved in another war?"

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The political horizon just then made that question seem all too apposite.

My answer came, without a moment of hesitation:

"You may think that a delicate question for me to answer, Sir; and it may put me in a very painful situation. But one thing is certain: it is impossible for me ever to fight against a country which has shown me nothing but hospitality and consideration for so many years. In England, I have found recognition and esteem."

* * * * *

Admiral Hall transmitted these words to Whitehall.

When I returned to London from Vienna, after the farcical trial of my cousin, Austria's former Minister in Rome, I found a letter from Lyndhurst:

> "I am given to understand that you have not yet shown enough of what they call 'intention.' If, they gave me to understand, you were, for instance, to show that intention, shall I say—more emotionally . . ."

* * * * *

Well, well! So there are still things in store for me!

Then I shall continue meanwhile picking my way through —the nettles, in my pursuit of happiness, until——

THE END

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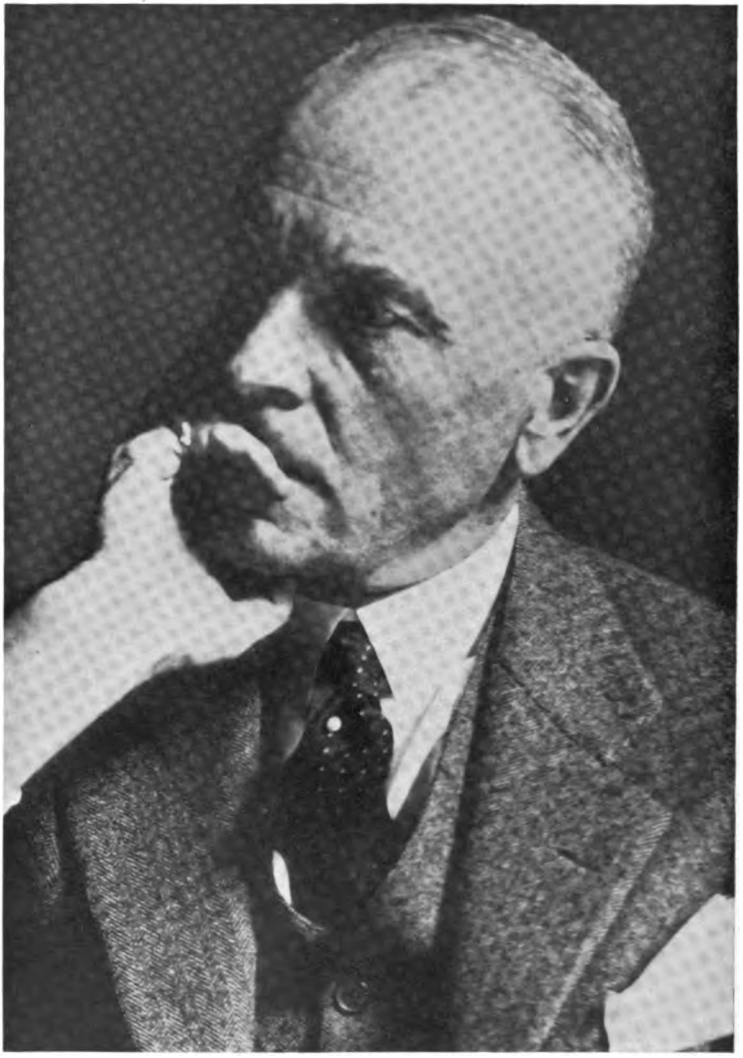

THE AUTHOR, 1935

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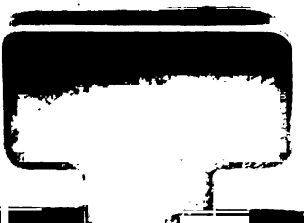

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